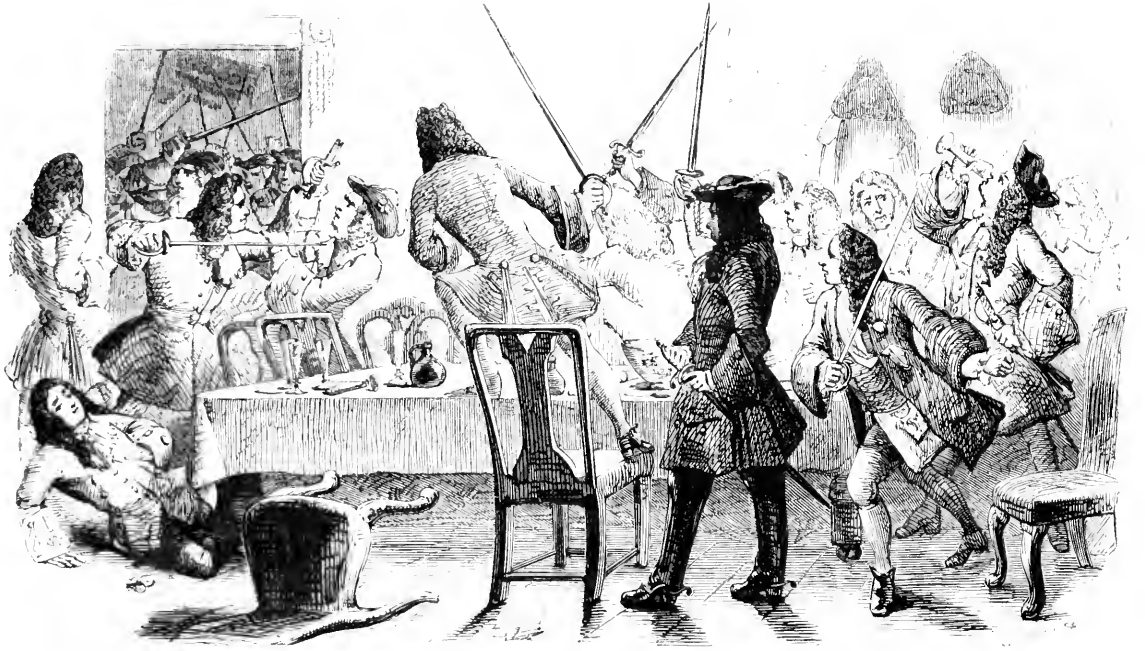

THE JACOBITE CLUB.

SONGS OF THE CAVALIERS

AND

ROUNDHEADS,

JACOBITE BALLADS,

&c. &c.

BY

GEORGE W. THORNBURY,

AUTHOR OF

"ART AND NATURE AT HOME AND ABROAD," "THE MONARCHS OF THE MAIN," "SHAKSPERE'S ENGLAND," &c.

"I love a ballad in print, a'-life; for then we are sure they are true."

THE WINTER'S TALE.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY H. S. MARKS.

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TO

DOUGLAS JERROLD.

THE DRAMATIST, SATIRIST, AND NOVELIST,

THESE VERSES ARE DEDICATED

BY THE AUTHOR.

FROM

ONE WHO IS STRUGGLING, AND HOPES TO WIN,

TO

ONE WHO HAS STRUGGLED, AND HAS WON.

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SONGS OF THE CAVALIERS AND ROUNDHEADS.

RUPERT'S MARCH.

CARABINE slung, stirrup well hung,
Flagon at saddle-bow merrily swung;
Toss up the ale, for our flag, like a sail.
Struggles and swells in the hot July gale.
Colours fling out, and then give them a shout—
We are the gallants to put them to rout.

Flash all your swords, like Tartarian hordes.
And scare the prim ladies of Puritan lords;
Our steel caps shall blaze through the long summer days,
As we, galloping, sing our mad Cavalier lays.
Then banners advance! By the lilies of France.
We are the gallants to lead them a dance.

Ring the bells back, though the sexton look black,
Defiance to knaves who are hot on our track.
"Murder and fire!" shout louder and higher;
Remember Edge-hill and the red-dabbled mire,
When our steeds we shall stall in the Parliament
hall,
And shake the old nest till the roof-tree shall fall.

Froth it up, girl, till it splash every curl,
October's the liquor for trooper and earl;
Bubble it up, merry gold in the cup,
We never may taste of to-morrow night's sup.
(Those red ribbons glow on thy bosom below
Like apple-tree bloom on a hillock of snow.)

No, by my word, there never shook sword
Better than this in the clutch of a lord;
The blue streaks that run are as bright in the sun
As the veins on the brow of that loveliest one;
No deep light of the sky, when the twilight is nigh,
Glitters more bright than this blade to the eye.

* * * * *

Well, whatever may hap, this rusty steel-cap
Will keep out full many a pestilent rap;
This buff, though it's old and not larded with gold,
Will guard me from rapier as well as from cold;

This scarf, rent and torn, though its colour is worn,
Shone gay as a page's but yesterday morn.

Here is a dint from the jagg of a flint,
Thrown by a Puritan just as a hint;
But this stab through the buff was a warning more rough,
When Coventry city arose in a huff;
And I met with this gash, as we rode with a crash
Into Noll's pikes on the banks of the Ash.

No jockey or groom wears so draggled a plume
As this that's just drenched in the swift-flowing Froom.
Red grew the tide ere we reached the steep side,
And steaming the hair of old Barbary's hide;
But for branch of that oak that saved me a stroke,
I had sunk there like herring in pickle to soak.

Pistolet crack flashed bright on our track,
And even the foam of the water turned black.
They were twenty to one, our poor rapier to gun,
But we charged up the bank, and we lost only one;
So I saved the old flag, though it was but a rag,
And the sword in my hand was snapped off to a jagg.

The water was churned as we wheeled and we turned,
And the dry brake to scare out the vermin we burned.
We gave our halloo, and our trumpet we blew;
Of all their stout fifty we left them but two;
With a mock and a laugh, won their banner and staff,
And trod down the cornets as thrashers do chaff.

Saddle my roan, his back is a throne,
Better than velvet or gold, you will own.
Look to your match, or some harm you may catch,
For treason has always some mischief to hatch;
And Oliver's out with all Haslerigg's rout,
So I'm told by this shivering, white-livered scout.

We came over the downs, through village and towns,
In spite of the sneers, and the curses and frowns;
Drowning their psalms, and stilling their qualms,
With a clatter and rattle of scabbards and arms.
Down, the long street, with a trample of feet,
For the echo of hoofs to a cavalier's sweet.

See black on each roof, at the sound of our hoof,
The Puritans gather, but keep them aloof;

Their muskets are long, and they aim at a throng,
But woe to the weak when they challenge the strong!
Butt-end to the door, one hammer more,
Our pike-men rush in and the struggle is o'er.

Storm through the gate, batter the plate,
Cram the red crucible into the grate;
Saddle-bags fill, Bob, Jenkin, and Will,
And spice the staved wine that runs out like a rill.
That maiden shall ride all to-day by my side,
Those ribbons are fitting a cavalier's bride.

Does Baxter say right, that a bodice laced tight,
Should never be seen by the sun or the light?
Like stars from a wood, shine under that hood.
Eyes that are sparkling, though pious and good.
Surely this waist was by Providence placed,
By a true lover's arm to be often embraced.

Down on your knees, you villains in frieze.
A draught to King Charles, or a swing from those trees;
Blow off this stiff lock, for 'tis useless to knock,
The ladies will pardon the noise and the shock.
From this bright dewy cheek, might I venture to speak,
I could kiss off the tears though she wept for a week.

Now loop me this scarf round the broken pike-staff,
'Twill do for a flag, though the Crop Heads may laugh.
Who was it blew? Give an halloo,
And hang out the pennon of crimson and blue;
A volley of shot is a welcoming hot;—
It cannot be troop of the murdering Scot?

Fire the old mill on the brow of the hill,
Break down the plank that runs over the rill,
Bar the town gate; if the burghers debate,
Shoot some to death, for the villains must wait;
Rip up the lead from the roofing o'er head,
And melt it for bullets or we shall be sped.

Now look to your buff, for steel is the stuff
To slash your brown jerkins with crimson enough;
There burst a flash—I heard their drums crash;
To horse! now for race over moorland and plash;
Ere the stars glimmer out, we will wake with a shout
The true men of York, who will welcome our rout.

We'll shake their red roofs with our echoing hoofs,
And flutter the dust from their tapestry woofs;

Their old Minster shall ring with our "God save
the king,"
And our horses shall drink at St. Christopher's
spring;
We shall welcome the meat, O the wine will taste
sweet,
When our boots we fling off, and as brothers we
meet.

THE TILT-YARD.

Noisy ran the blue and orange,
  Noisy ran the red,
Like a flight of crimson birds,
  With their broad wings spread.
Lusty, all in scarlet,
  Ran the sturdy grooms—
And, oh! wherever broke the spears,
  The tossing of the plumes!

First the black and silver,
  Then the blue and brown;
But John of the Beard, in yellow,
  Carried away the crown.
He rode, and quick the shivers
  Flew up—in ran the grooms—
And, oh! whoever rose or fell,
  The tossing of the plumes!

Then came the black and yellow,
  The russet and the blue;
Never met in tilting-yard,
  Such a merry crew.
The ladies laughed, a rippling wave,
  Mirth spread to all the grooms—
And, oh! whenever snapped a spear,
  The tossing of the plumes!

THE CAVALIERS' MUSTER.

HERE is Sir Reginald, gentle and true,
Courtly and bright in his silver and blue;
There is old Philip behind him as gruff,
Sturdy and grim in his orange and buff.

Here is Bob Darcy still smoothing his hair,
For the frost dew has silvered his love-lock so fair;
And there is the blackamoor close at his back,
Laughing and patting a pottle of sack.

See how old Oliver (fie on his name)
Opens the flag that blows out like a flame;
Up fly the swords of a dozen or two,—
Were gentlemen ever so trusty and true?

How the brave lad with the feather of white,
Struggles and strains, yet with looks of delight,
At the huge sable charger his father has lent,
His red coat still drips from the flood of the Trent.

With careful set faces the trumpeters puff,
The drummer works hard at the drum-skin so tough,
As the sheriff rides up, with a parchment pulled out,
And reads as he can through the cheer and the shout.

Now a pull at their bridles, a word and a cry,
A frown at the earth and a smile at the sky,
A setting of cloaks, a low curse (half in play),
And the sixty brave gentlemen gallop away.

THE FOUNTAIN BEAULIEU.

THE silver plume of the fountain
  Shakes in the summer wind,
Bright spray drops slowly trickle
  Down the beech's glossy rind;
Untiring sweet, as woman's tongue.
  Those waters do appear,
That fill the Fountain Beaulieu
  In the spring time of the year.

The fountain's glittering banner
  The wind blows struggling out,
Sprinkling, like showers of April,
  The young flowers all about;
With lavish hand the sea-god flings
  The silver far and near,
Gaily at Fountain Beaulieu,
  In the spring time of the year.

Through a veil of crystal drippings
A marble form appears:
It might, indeed, be Niobe,
Melting away in tears;
Gay in the granite basin
The bubbles swim and veer
Round the palace fount at Beaulieu,
In the spring time of the year.

And when the sun looks smiling out,
Bright rainbow mists arise,
As glorious as if Juno
Had sent the peacock's dyes
To veil her marble image,
And worshippers to cheer,
Such pleasures are at Beaulieu,
In the spring time of the year.

Gold paves the stately terrace,
The sun of an April morn,
And far beyond the gardens
Rings out the lusty horn;
The dogs are hoarsely baying,
To wake the sleepers near,
Rousing thy echoes, Beaulieu,
In the spring time of the year.

In the court-yard stands a dial,
With the motto "Man's a shade,"
The peacock, like a sultan,
His glory has displayed;
Through emeraldine lustre
Flushes of gold appear
Beside the Fountain Beaulieu,
In the spring time of the year.

The cock, that stately monarch,
Leads out his chattering wives,
The lime trees all in blossom
Are grown to mountain hives,
The pigeons on the gables
Are cooing without fear
Above thy fountain, Beaulieu,
In the spring time of the year.

The spray from the music water
Drives off the cruizing bees,
Its babble drowns the thrushes' song
Among the dewy trees;
Against the sky of azure
The dove's white wings appear
Beside the Fountain Beaulieu,
In the spring time of the year.

Soft shone the sun of April
Upon the swarded grass,
Pale gleams from amber cloudings
Over the green turf pass;
The blackbird piped and fluted,
The throstle chanted clear
Beside the Fountain Beaulieu,
In the spring time of the year.

So stately down the river,
Between the sloping lawns,
Floated the swan and cygnets,
Scaring the drinking fawns;
Their white breasts scarcely ruffled.
The water crystal clear—
O! the pleasant fount of Beaulieu,
In the spring time of the year.

The noisy rooks were building
In the tops of the lofty elms,
That shook in the breeze of April
Like plumes in a thousand helms;
For morn had come to the weeping earth.
And kissed away each tear,
O! pleasant home of Beaulieu.
In the spring time of the year.

The sun on blazoned windows
Shone with a lustre rare,
The mole came up from his winter grave,
The snake from his silent lair;
The swallow tired with travel,
The young birds' carols cheer.
O the noisy woods of Beaulieu,
In the spring time of the year!

Bright bursts of sun so laughter-like
With fitful joy broke out;
The lark, blue heaven's hermit,
Sprang up from the fields without:
White in the happy sunlight,
The rooks' black wings appear,—
'Twas at the Fountain Beaulieu,
In the spring time of the year.

The clock in the great court turret
Was glistening in the sun,
But Time, with shadowy finger,
Athwart the disc began
To point to noon and evening,
Alas! to morn too near,
O! pleasant Fountain Beaulieu,
In the spring time of the year.

WIGAN'S RETREAT.

HURRAH! for the trumpeter blowing his best—
Blood on his feather, and blood on his crest;
Here was old Warrener, trusty as steel,
Fitting a crimson spur fast to his heel.

There rode the banner-man—Lord! how his flag
Blew all about with its patch and its rag—
But he shook it, and made the old tawny and blue
Flutter its welcome words, "Tender and true."

Robinson's helmet had tokens of work;
Jenkin was powder-scorched, black as a Turk;
There were notches inch deep in young Bellamy's
sword,
He had shed his best blood at the Yellow-stone ford.

Powder-black, bleeding lads, hungry and torn;
Brown faces, wan faces, haggard and worn,
Laughing to think of the ups and the downs,
Riding rough-shod o'er the Puritan clowns.

Steady and slow, with a thought for the dead,
Some with a bandage on arm and on head
Scarcely awake, till the rap at a flint
Showed them good coin, sirs, sound from the mint.

When the gun spoke and long barrels looked out,
From window and loop-hole, and gable and spout,
Then they struck spurs, and the trumpeter, Jack,
Blew till his yellow face clouded with black.

Like a swift lightning flame, through the ripe corn
Ran the loud welcome of anger and scorn;
Up went the sabres—a flashing of light
Spread from the cheering left on to the right.

A staggering blinding of shot and of flame,
Struck down the scarfs and the feathers that came,
But when the black thunder-cloud burst with a roar,
Out broke the Wiganers—thirty-two score.

Have you seen the sea leap when a dyke has
broke in?
Or a swollen Scotch torrent leap down in a linn?

Then you've seen the hot charge that swept Bolsover
through,
When Wigan rode first of the "tender and true."

Wigan was bloody, and dusty and worn,
His buff torn with pike-head and bramble and thorn,
His scarf all awry, and his feather in twain,
His saddle-cloth purple with blood of the slain.

His collar of point-lace, all mudded and red,
A gash on his forehead, a rag round his head;
Yet still bowing low to the townsmen, who scowl.
And calling for sack at the "Flagon and Bowl."

The host by the sleeve, and the maid by the hand,
He praised her—the beauty of Bolsover land;
Then with strong shouting of hurry and force,
Crying with pistol shot—"Gallants to horse!'

THE TROOPERS' RIDE.

Good men and trusty men.
Riding together,
Shoulder to shoulder,
Minding no weather;
Splash through the marshes.
Tramp o'er the mountains.
Close by the gable-ends.
Under the fountains.

Stopping to bait and eat,
Hand to the flagon,
Hungry as good St. George.
Fresh from the dragon;
Cheering Sir Robert,
Lord of the manor,
When he rode up to us.
Shaking his banner.

Firing a pelt of shot,
  Fierce at Sir Roger's,
Coward! he's turning red,
  Seeing the sogers,
Firing a loud salute;
  As was our duty,
When we passed Deveril,
  Casket of beauty.

THE SALLY FROM COVENTRY.

"Passion o' me!" cried Sir Richard Tyrone,
Spurning the sparks from the broad paving-stone,
"Better turn nurse and rock children to sleep,
Than yield to a rebel old Coventry Keep.
No, by my halidom, no one shall say,
Sir Richard Tyrone gave a city away."

Passion o' me! how he pulled at his beard.
Fretting and chafing if any one sneered,
Clapping his breastplate and shaking his fist,
Giving his grizzly moustachios a twist,
Running the protocol through with his steel,
Grinding the letter to mud with his heel.

Then he roared out for a pottle of sack,
Clapped the old trumpeter twice on the back,
Leaped on his bay with a dash and a swing,
Bade all the bells in the city to ring,
And when the red flag from the steeple went down,
Open they flung every gate in the town.

To boot! and to horse! and away like a flood,
A fire in their eyes, and a sting in their blood;
Hurrying out with a flash and a flare,
A roar of hot guns, a loud trumpeter's blare,
And first, sitting proud as a king on his throne,
At the head of them all dashed Sir Richard Tyrone.

Crimson and yellow, and purple and dun,
Fluttering scarf, flowing bright in the sun,
Steel like a mirror on brow and on breast,
Scarlet and white on their feather and crest,
Banner that blew in a torrent of red,
Borne by Sir Richard, who rode at their head.

The 'trumpet' went down—with a gash on his poll,
Struck by the parters of body and soul.
Forty saddles were empty; the horses ran red
With foul Puritan blood from the slashes that bled.

Curses and cries and a gnashing of teeth,
A grapple and stab on the slippery heath,
And Sir Richard leaped up on the fool that went down,
Proud as a conqueror donning his crown.

They broke them a way through a flooding of fire,
Trampling the best blood of London to mire,
When suddenly rising a smoke and a blaze,
Made all "the dragon's sons" stare in amaze:
"O ho!" quoth Sir Richard, "my city grows hot,
I've left it rent paid to the villanous Scot."

RAISING THE TOWN.

Set the big bell rocking, you sexton sot.
And rouse the burghers against the Scot.
Hang to the rope, the bell must have scope,
Pull with a will, and pull with a hope,
And then give the villains a shot—
Why not?
And rouse the city against the Scot.

Cling to the clapper, and hammer and clash,
From Peter's to Andrew's, the 'prentices rash
Will leap to their swords, and leaving their boards,
Scurry like wild deer over the fords.
Now drag at the old fuzzed rope,
No Pope,
Or Knox shall rule us, while gibbet has rope.

Beat the old brass, till its hurrying roar
Rouse the towns-people score by score.

Hammer and beat, till they scurry and meet
Up on the postern and down in the street,
Beat, beat!
We've need of them all in the street.

Ram out the gun, from the top of the tower,
There goes the bell, 'tis twelve by the hour,
Cram it with shot, we'll give it them hot,
Thief and pedlar and beggarly Scot.
Oh, we can't bate a bullet or shot,
'Od rot!
Blaze till it burst at the Scot.

Swinging and swaying, the ponderous chime
Shakes the steeple from time to time;
The torches they run, and one after one
The city is rousing, they jostle and run,
The game is started, the scrimmage begun.
The gun!
Comes like thunder to deafen and stun.

Lights are spreading from pane to pane,
There was a flash, and another again
From Michael's tower, with a flurry of shot,
Quick and steady, and fierce and hot,
Let the coward go shiver and rot,
Why not?
Rake the van of the staggering Scot.

THE TRUMPETER.

Of golden silk and crimson,
  My trumpet flag was made.
I rode as in a forest
  Of pike and gun and blade;
And I blew, blew, blew,
For I liked the merry crew,
  And rap, rap, the kettle-drummers played.

We saw them barricading,
  They met us with a laugh,
But closing up we charged them grim.
  As the colonel shook his staff;
And I blew, blew, blew,
For I liked the merry crew,
  And we drove the Barebones as the wind drives chaff.

Through lanes we swished our sabres,
  Swam rivers, ramparts leaped,
We ride through snow and tempest,
  When watch and sentry sleep;
And I blew, blew, blew,
For I liked the merry crew,
  And I led them with a shout and with a leap.

ENTERING DUNDEE.

Shouting "Goring!" slashing, roaring,
Singing, swearing, musket flaring, colours blowing free,
On a day in pleasant May, never minding right of way,
Never stopping shot to pay,
Merry rode the troopers into fair Dundee.

Sparrow-shooting, crying, hooting,
Tossing, prancing, pennon dancing, through the window see—
Clashing scabbard, not a laggard, spurring fast from lea and haggard,
Shaking every noisy scabbard,
Merry rode the troopers into fair Dundee.

THE THREE SCARS.

THIS I got on the day that Goring
Fought through York, like a wild beast roaring—
The roofs were black, and the streets were full,
The doors built up with the packs of wool;
But our pikes made way through a storm of shot,
Barrel to barrel till locks grew hot;
Frere fell dead, and Lucas was gone,
But the drum still beat and the flag went on.

This I caught from a swinging sabre,
All I had from a long night's labour;
When Chester flamed, and the streets were red,
In splashing shower fell the molten lead,
The fire sprang up, and the old roof split,
The fire-ball burst in the middle of it;
With a clash and a clang the troopers they ran,
For the siege was over ere well began.

This I got from a pistol butt
(Lucky my head's not a hazel nut;)
The horse they raced, and scudded and swore:
There were Leicestershire gentlemen, seventy score;
Up came the "Lobsters," covered with steel—
Down we went with a stagger and reel;
Smash at the flag, I tore it to rag,
And carried it off in my foraging bag.

THE NIGHT OF THE SALLY.

THE wind plays with the tight strings of the fiddle,
The chaplain's fiddle hanging on the wall,
And shakes the hawk-bells where they hang,
And the feathers, red and tall,
Of the Baron and his three and forty troopers,
Singing the loud hunting chorus in the hall.

They join hands, clashing flagons, shouting, drinking,
Lifting their red Venice glasses to the light,
Shaking their corslets, laughing, flouting,
Their fierce eyes sad but bright;
For the Baron and his three and forty troopers
Are all sworn to die together on this night.

One strokes the staghounds leaping from their couples,
One pulls the jester screaming by the ear,
A third says a quick prayer with the chaplain,
A fourth breaks out into a cheer;
For the Baron and his three and forty troopers
Are stout men who never know a fear.

LEAVING CHESTER.

CANNON bom, bom—cannon bom, bom,
Trumpeters sounding, away! away!
"Five kisses to you, pretty maiden in blue,
And a gold ring, but not just to-day, to-day."

Fifers tweet, tweet—fifers tweet, tweet,
Trumpeters sounding, away! away!
"Here's the bill and the score, twenty bottles or more;"
"O we'll settle, but not just to-day, to-day."

Cannon bom, bom—cannon bom, bom,
Trumpeters sounding, away! away!
"Here's the charter and seal—do you think we would steal?"
"And the town plate?" "O not just to-day, to-day."

Fifers tweet, tweet—fifers tweet, tweet,
Trumpeters sounding, away! away!
"Quick, the chalice and cup—here's that priest coming up,"
"And the paten!" "O not just to-day, to-day."

Trumpeter sound—trumpeter sound,
The troopers are riding away! away!
"Here's the sheriff and mayor—how they noddle and stare!"
"And the town plate?" "Well, not just to-day, to-day."

MELTING OF THE EARL'S PLATE.

HERE'S the gold cup all bossy with satyrs and saints,
And my race-bowl (now, women, no whining and plaints!)
From the paltriest spoon to the costliest thing,
We'll melt it all down for the use of the king.

Here's the chalice stamped over with sigil and cross,—
Some day we'll make up to the chapel the loss.
Now bring me my father's great emerald ring,
For I'll melt down the gold for the good of the king.

And bring me the casket my mother has got,
And the jewels that fall to my Barbara's lot;
Then dry up your eyes and do nothing but sing,
For we're helping to coin the gold for the king.

MELTING THE EARL'S PLATE.

This dross we'll transmute into weapons of steel,
Tempered blades for the hand, sharpest spurs for the heel;
And when Charles, with a shout, into London we bring,
We'll be glad to remember this deed for the king.

Bring the hawk's silver bells, and the nursery spoon,
The crucible's ready—we're nothing too soon;
For I hear the horse neigh that shall carry the thing
That'll bring up a smile in the eyes of the king.

There go my old spurs, and the old silver jug,—
'Twas just for a moment a pang and a tug;
But now I am ready to dance and to sing,
To think I've thrown gold in the chest of my king.

The earrings lose shape, and the coronet too,
I feel my eyes dim with a sort of a dew.
Hurrah for the posset dish!—Everything
Shall run into bars for the use of the king.

That spoon is a sword, and this thimble a pike;
It's but a week's garret in London belike—
Then a dash at Whitehall, and the city shall ring
With the shouts of the multitude bringing the king.

SEARCHING THE MANOR-HOUSE.

FLUTTER, feather, flutter.
Flutter, feather, flutter,
From head to heel, an't we covered with steel?
Why, then, let the mad fools mutter;
Our colours shall flap and flutter.

Banner, struggle, banner,
The parliament claims this manor;
Are we not tough, in our iron and buff?
Tough as the oaks of the manor?
Up, then, lads, with the banner.

A pottle of sack—a pottle—
And give us the merriest bottle;
Great judges of wine, are these lads of mine;
The oldest wine in your bottle,
You butler, there, a pottle.

Rattle, drummers, rattle,
I see the fools will battle;
And trumpeters blow, till your eye-balls show;
Sound for the instant battle—
Fire! when the drum-sticks rattle.

HOW SIR RICHARD DIED.

STATELY as bridegroom to a feast,
  Sir Richard trod the scaffold stair,
And, bowing to the crowd, untied
  The love-locks from his sable hair;
Took off his watch, "Give that to Ned.
I've done with time," he proudly said.

'Twas bitter cold—it made him shake—
  Said one, "Ah! see the villain's look?"
Sir Richard, with a scornful frown,
  Cried—"Frost not fear my body shook!"
Giving a gold piece to the slave,
He laughed—"Now praise me master knave!"

They pointed, with a sneering smile,
Unto a black box, long and grim;
But no white shroud, or badge of death,
Had power to draw a tear from him;
"It needs no lock," he said, in jest,
"This chamber, where to-night I rest."

Then crying out—"God save the king!"
In spite of hiss and shout and frown;
He stripped his doublet, dropped his cloak,
And gave the headsman's man a crown;
Then, "Oh! for heaven!" proudly cried.
And bowed his head—and so he died.

THE KING IS COMING TO LONDON.

(A Song of the Restoration.)

Let bonfires shine in every place
And redden many a laughing face,
O pray that God may give His grace,
To Charles, who's coming to London.
And sing and ring the bells apace,
But let no Roundhead lean and base,
Dare of his crop ears show a trace,
When the King is coming to London.

At every window hang a flag,
Though it be torn and rent to a rag,
And shout till tongue refuse to wag,
The King is coming to London.
Let not one trooper dare to lag
His old slashed coat to button and tag,
But sling on his horn and his bullet bag,
For the King is coming to London.

And in the face of scented lords,
Point to the notches upon your swords,
And cry like the drunken gipsy hordes,
The King is coming to London.
Instead of a plume wear oaken boughs,
And open the door of every house,
Then make every passer-by carouse,
For the King is coming to London.

Jewel the hair of daughter and spouse,
Even the dying must carouse,
Crawl to the window and drink and bouse,
For the King is coming to London.
Pale madmen wake with cry and stare,
And run to taste the fresh blue air,
Then gibber to see the splendour there,
For the King is coming to London.

The beggar shall rouse from his fever lair,
The butcher leave the bleeding bear,
And even gaolers forget their care,
For the King is coming to London.
Tear up benches, and rip up boards,
To build up fires sell brooches, and gauds,
And when you sing remember the chords,
The King is coming to London.

Grim felons free from fetter and bond,
Whisper at golden chain and wand,
And eye the gems with ogling fond,
When the King is coming to London.
The scrivener leaves the half-forged bond,
Forgets the wretched man he wronged,
And hurries where his clients thronged,
When the King is coming to London.

Debtors whose blood's grown cold and thin,
Warm with the laughter and the din,
That thaws the half froze heart within.
When the King is coming to London.
The poorest tinker with kith and kin,
Must now forget his solder and tin,
For labour to-day is a sort of a sin,
When the King is coming to London.

Old men rub their palsied palm,
And sing with tremulous voice a psalm
Of Simeon blest now tempests calm,
For the King is coming to London.
The plague-smit man shall feel a balm,
And his sickness pass, as if by a charm,
When he waves for joy his bandaged arm.
For the King is coming to London.

THE ENTRY INTO LONDON.

Swing it out from tower and steeple, now the dark
crowds of the people
Press and throng as if deep gladness ruled them, as
the moon the flood;
How they scream and sway about, sing and swear,
and laugh and flout,
As if madness universal fevered the whole nation's
blood.

Drowsy watchers on the tower start to hear the
sudden hour
Shouted out from pier and jetty, o'er the river's
mimic waves;
When the bells, with clash and clang, into life and
motion sprang,
As to rouse the dead and buried, peaceful sleeping
in their graves.

Flags from every turret hung, thousands to the chimneys clung,
Shining pennons, gay and veering, from the belfry chamber float;
Weary poets ceased to rhyme, and the student at the chime
Closed his books and joined the rabble, and with shouting strained his throat;

Every cooper left his vat—there was sympathy in that;
All the shops of 'Cheap and Ludgate were fast barred upon that day;
The red wine, that bubbled up, left the toper in his cup;
And his crutch and staff the cripple, in his gladness, threw away;

Then the bully left his dice, tailors leapt up in a trice,
The smith's fire upon the forges died and smouldered slowly out;
The Protector, in his tomb, slumbering till the crack of doom,
Might have frowned, and slowly waken'd at the thunder of that shout;

The hot brazier hushed his clamour, and threw by
his ponderous hammer;
The shipwright his arm upraising, the dogshores to
knock away,
Let them stand just as they were, and ran out and
left his care,
Then the sailors, flocking after, helped to swell the
crowd that day.

Some are watching for the gun, some hold ale up
to the sun,
And the bona-robas' eyes, love-sparkling, gather
lustre from the wine;
Thames is all alive with barges, gilded prows and
blazoned targes;
And the matrons' hoods of satin in the sunlight glow
and shine.

There were bullies, thieves and churls, from the
peasant up to earls,
Noisy crowds of fluttering varlets, and lace-cover'd
serving-men;
And the children, held on high, laugh to see the
clear blue sky,
Shouting, as their fathers told them, "Our good
king is come again!"

Still the tramp of many feet echoes through each
lane and street,
Like the heaving undulation of the tempest-driven
tide;
And the belfries reel and rock, with the joy-bell's
sudden shock,
Pulsing out fresh roars of welcome ere the last
glad sounds subside.

How the 'prentices they mustered, round each door
and casement cluster'd;
At the merchant's latticed windows hung rich ro-
bings of brocade,
Cloth of gold, and Indian stuff, and in ample folds
enough
All the princes of the world to have gorgeously ar-
rayed.

And by every window stood, maidens veiled in
silken hood,
Half-retreating, coy and modest, half-delighting to
be seen;
Many a wild-rose you may seek, ere you match
that blushing cheek;
Every 'prentice thinks his mistress beautiful as any
queen.

Dark crowds, down each winding street, hurry, while the tramp of feet
Rises louder than the pealing of the massy cannons near;
Like an overflowing tide, press the people on each side,
With a din so deep and murmurous it is terrible to hear.

How the sword-blades in the sun glitter as the signal-gun
Flashes through the flags and pennons, and the masts that line the shore;
And, slow swinging from each steeple, far above the shouting people,
The joy-bells, o'er roof and gable, do their thunder-music pour.

Oh! the horns blow long and loudly, and the kettle-drums throb proudly,
Like the lark's voice 'mid the thunder, comes the shrill cry of the flute;
And the stormy acclamation of a new-deliver'd nation,
Fills the air with endless echoes, ere the Abbey bells grow mute.

As the dull throb of the drum pulses o'er the din and hum,
Slow the pike-heads gleam and glitter past the Palace and the Park;
And the Crop-heads frown and mutter, as the distant banners flutter;
While the crowd are bonfires piling, ready to light up the dark.

And the black and heaving crowds roll like tempest-driven clouds,
As from out that thunderous silence breaks the sudden shout and cheer
From the turrets and the roofs—for the sound of coming hoofs
Each one listens like a hunter waiting silent for the deer.

For indeed one common soul seems to animate the whole;
Louder than the bells or cannon give the multitude a shout;
From the Thames, alive with boats, all the rowers strain their throats;
From amid the striped awnings and the flags the wind does flout.

You should hear the thunder-claps as the royal
banner flaps,
And the streams of lords and ladies file in slow
procession by,
Like the clamour of a storm, when the dark clouds,
without form,
Drift, in whirlwind, headlong, wildly 'cross the
chasm of the sky.

And *he* bowed to left and right, and the sunbeam's
holy light
Lit his brow, and, like a circlet, or a glory, seem'd
to burn:
Graciously he bent him low, down unto his saddle-
bow,
And a smile lit all his features, usually so sad and
stern.

And he gazed with regal pride on the crowds on
either side,
While his hat and sweeping feathers held he in his
bridle-hand;
Bow'd him to his white steed's mane, where his
dark locks' glossy rain
Mingled, then rose smiling, with a look of proud
command.

But he shudder'd as before him rose a fountain, arching o'er him;
Dark as blood it rose, empurpled with the juice of flashing wine.
As he passed the Banquet-room came a sudden cloud of gloom,
In his eyes no longer gladness seem'd with radiance, to shine.

Then, responsive to the people, swung the joy-bells in the steeple,
And the welcome of glad thousands drove all sorrow from his mind;
And the sweet spring-gather'd flowers fall before his feet in showers,
As the sky were raining blossoms, and their perfume fill'd the wind.

From old flag-staffs, black and shatter'd, hung red standards, rent and tatter'd,
Scorch'd with fire of Cromwell's cannon, hack'd by sword, and torn with shot;
Almost lost when stately Basing, with old Fairfax' fire was blazing;
Shredded in the struggle long 'tween brave Wigan and the Scott.

And their crimson shadows fell on old faces he knew well:
Faces scarr'd, and grim, and swarthy, worn with suffering and with care;
Men who from the dungeon dim had burst forth to welcome him;
But their brows were grown more wrinkled, and their silver locks more bare.

Some deep-notch'd and broken brands waved in their feeble hands;
Others fill'd the echoing welkin with remember'd battle-cries;
Some fired off their musketoons as the pleasantest of tunes;
Others pulled their hats' broad flaps deeper o'er their moistening eyes.

THE BONFIRE AT TEMPLE-BAR.

Sung by a party of merry fellows, dressed in greasy crimson and yellow satin, as they leaned out of the window of a Fleet-street tavern, May 29, 1660.

With a flagon in each hand,
And a bowl before us,
While the barrel's running gold,
Cavaliers, the chorus!
Lest misfortune enter here,
Let us now debar her,
Tossing off Canary cups,
With a Sassarara!

Through the lattice see the west,
Like a burning ruby;
Who to-night goes sober hence
Shall be dubbed a booby.
Redder than that core of fire
Flash the gathered torches,
Blaze the bonfires in the streets
Round a thousand porches,

Full cups round, my hearts of steel,
Lads of trusty mettle;
Split the chair and break the form,
Chop in two the settle;
So the bonfire, roof-tree high,
Leap up to the steeple,
While with waving hats and swords
We address the people.

Burn the books of crop-eared Prynn,
Make the Roundheads shiver;
Give a shout to scare the rogues
Right across the river.
Blow the organ trumpet-loud,
Set the mad bells clashing,
Redden all the stones of Cheap
With the wine-cup's splashing.

Traitors who to-night retire
Cheek unflushed and sober,
I'll drench with this metal can
Of the brown October.
Drain the tun, yes, every drop,
Then split up the barrel,
Beat the pewter till it's flat.
Chorus to the carol.

Cavaliers, upon your knees.
Here's a health to heroes;
Jenkin, when I give the sign,
Fire the patarreros.
Blow the trumpets till they burst.
Welcome to the Stuart,
Slit his weasand who will dare
To say he's not a true heart.

Lift the stone up, tear Noll out,
Lop his head and swing it
From the triple Tyburn tree.
Where with groans we bring it.
Shake old Whitehall with the roar
Till the windows clatter,
Then the bones of Oliver
On the dunghill scatter.

Open throw the prison doors,
Free the wounded troopers—
When the Brewer's sword is snapt.
Shall the brave be droopers?
Lead them out into the sun,
Let them feel the breezes;
Crowd around them with the cup.
For their life-blood freezes.

Even let the crosses red
Be for once forgotten;
Let the dying hear us shout
Ere he's black and rotten;
Round the plague-pit cry and sing,
Let the wine elate us;
Wine's the balm for blain and boil,
The real Mithridates.

Now they grind the Tyburn axe,
Sing the song of Wigan,
So it pierce the prison bars
While the graves are digging.
Vane turns pale to hear the hiss
Of a thousand-headed adder,
While his sour face, black and calm,
Makes the rabble madder.

Fire the muskets all at once,
Snap off every pistol,
Wave the glasses in the sun,
And then smash the crystal;
Drag the dusty maypole out,
Ring it round with blossom;
Throw your caps into the air,
As for banners toss 'em.

Rear the pole, and let us dance
  Hand-in-hand in chorus;
Bid the piper blow his best,
  Strutting on before us.
Bang the cans upon the board,
  Cadence to the roaring
Of the crowds who with the Rumps
  Down Fleet-street are pouring.

Swing me in my sword-belt up
  If I do not clamour
Louder than the merry din
  Of the pewterer's hammer.
Thin-cheeked debtors from the Fleet,
  Red-eyed, hungry-hearted,
Cry for very joy to think
  Red-nosed Noll departed.

Wave the flag until it split,
  Break up all the benches,
Round the fires that roast the Rumps
  Kiss the laughing wenches.
Fling broad pieces to the crowd,
  Let them fight and trample,
Every starving caitiff soon
  Will have "counters" ample.

Tories! hearts of steel and gold,
Flash your swords to heaven,
Now the Brewer's dead and gone
With his bitter leaven.
Shout until the steeples shake,
And the bells are swinging,
Every bell in every house
Should be set a-ringing.

Ring from Cheapside unto Paul's,
Right to Piccadilly;
Wave the flags from Temple-bar
To where Holborn's hilly;
From the Barbican to Bow,
Up the Strand to Charing,
All along the Surrey side
Are the bonfires flaring.

Gracious-street to Crooked-lane,
Eastcheap to Old Jewry,
Whitefriars, too, is all alive,
Ram-alley shouts in fury;
At the Compter window see
All the rogues are staring,
The very gaoler's wakened up
By the torches flaring.

Right from Stratford to the Thames,
Then away to Clapham,
Bang the war-drums, strain them tight.
Then with cudgel rap 'em;
Clash the brass and raise a din,
Maddening the Quakers,
Leave beside the grave the dead,
All ye undertakers.

Let the baker's cheek grow red,
And the butcher's redder,
Make the blacksmith leave his forge.
Smithfield hind his wedder;
Carpenters the coffin leave,
Half made do for traitors,
If a Crophead dare to frown,
Hang him in his gaiters.

Now then drink till we grow blind,
And our voices fail us,
When the spirits of the wine
All at once assail us.
Then let jug and table fall,
Pile the cups who love us;
Let the topers sober left
Sing a dirge above us.

UP THE THAMES.

(Twenty-ninth of May.)

Up the Thames with flashing oar,
Let the Tower guns flame and roar.
Belching fire from every bore.

All the water ripples red,
Fiery shines the river bed
With the bonfires over head.

See the old bridge, black as jet,
Casting shadows, like a net,
Lights upon the parapet.

Pipe and drum in every boat;
All the Templars sing and float
To the merry bugle note.

See the fellows' corslets flash;
How the bright oars drip and splash,
As beneath the arch we dash.

Now from every roof and wall,
Shop and garret, yard and stall,
You can hear the cannon call.

Varlet, yeoman, knight and lord,
Wave their hat, and wig, and sword;
Every thief forgot his fraud.

Banners waved from London Bridge;
Pennons shook from roof and ridge,
Thick as wings of summer midge.

Ploughing water, dyed with flame;
Fast the royal galley came;
Blushed the river, as with shame.

Then again the cannon spoke;
And the clouds, as with a stroke,
Seemed in fragments to be broke.

Beating the black tide to froth,
Fell a thousand oars in wrath;
Cheers burst forth from south and north.

From the steeples rose a blaze;
Every casement in amaze
Shone with red and sparkling rays.

Bells swung madly thro' the mist;
Like a frown, the fog was kiss'd
Quite away to amethyst.

From the gardens came the cheers
Of a million cavaliers,
Some could scarcely shout for tears.

JACOBITE BALLADS.

THE STARVED POET.

"DEAD, DEAD!"
So the old nurse careless said,
Letting fall his lifeless head;
Many shadows round the bed,
But not one mourner for the dead.
Dead, dead.

Fame, fame!
The old clock's ticking just the same,
The ceiling reddens with the flame,
The wind sinks back from whence it came,
Moaning as if in very shame,
Fame, fame.

"Gone to rest!"
Said the nurse, and crossed her breast,
Groping in the dusty chest,
Where the rat squealed from its nest,
"Nothing but a threadbare vest,
Verses, verses—all the rest."

"Write, write!
He would scribble all the night,
Was it wonder he grew white?
Crazed his brain, and dim his sight,
Scarcely knowing day from night.
Write, write!"

"Lord, lord!
Last week came Sir Richard Ford,
Playing with his silver sword,
Tapping on the empty board,
How at every jest he roared,
Lord, lord!"

"Bread, bread!"
Moaned the master who is dead,
"Though my pen is heavy lead,
And my lungs this morning bled,
I have children must be fed.
Bread, bread."

"Debt, debt!
Half a guinea owing yet,
Many nights of wind and wet,
Many weary vigils set,
This is all I ever get.
Debt, debt!"

THE OLD PARK GATES.

(Mansion, temp. Charles II.)

THERE are two statues of cold grey stone,
Mossy and black with years,
Creatures that never feel love nor joy,
Nor ever shed human tears;
Shine sun, beat wind, blow hot, blow cold,
They stand stern looking on,
Taking no 'count of the days or hours,
Nor the ages past and gone.

Ruthless creatures of hard grey stone,
Guarding the old park-gates,
Firm on your throne-like pedestals,
Gazing calm-eyed as Fates;
Whether a bridal train laughs thro',
Or a coffin pass within,
Never a word and never a smile
At the silence or the din.

The gates stained red with iron rust,
Are twined with love-knots true,
Quaint winding cyphers mystical,
Still streaked with gold and blue.
There proudly round ramp herald beasts,
And round hang fruit and flowers;
But gapped and warped with lightning-stroke,
And the damp of cold night showers.

On the slabs the figures trample,
Grow long dry nodding weeds,
And there the starling loves to build,
And there the robin feeds;
While, like blood-gouts, the rust-stains drip
Foul, on the pillar's base,
And night and day try sun and rain
The cypher to deface.

No longer rolls the gilded coach
Down the long avenue,
Lit by the smoking torches' light
That glistens in the dew;
No longer through the massy gate,
Sweep banished cavaliers,
Stern men who kneel to kiss the ground,
Shedding some bitter tears.

The house is down, the deer are dead—
The park's a lonely place.
The timid rabbits careless feed,
Unscared by human face:
But all day singing to himself,
As happy as a child,
The blackbird sits and prunes his wing,—
The spot has grown so wild.

God's curses on the drunkard's hand
That flung the spotted die!
Did he not hear the groan that shook
The vault where his fathers lie?
Blue lightning pierce the shrivelled heart
That never beat with pride.
To tread the cedar chamber where
His father's fathers died.

The die was thrown; the manor-house
Shook from the roof to base,
The sallow portraits in the hall
Gazed with reproachful face:
Without, the old ancestral trees
Groaned loud as lightning-smit;
The herald's window sparkled out,
The moon shone full on it.

The fool!—a beggar through the gate
  Creeps out with head hung down,
Not seeing how the guardian gods,
  Upon their pillars frown.
He hears the winner's mocking laugh
  Come ringing through the tree,—
One side the gate lies heaven,
  One side flows misery.

* * * * *

But had I time sufficient,
  I could for hours relate
How Tory, Whig, and Jacobite
  Have passed through yonder gate.
The lord with orange-ribbon
  Bright at his button-hole,
Proud of the vote by which he sold
  For a star—his body and soul.

The gallant, bound for Derby,
  With a white rose at his breast,
Returning pale and wounded,
  The lace torn from his vest:
Or chaired the conquering Member
  Born high above his peers,
With noisy acclamations,
  And loud election cheers.

Now on the iron crown that caps
The centre of the gate,
A robin comes, and in the sun,
Sings early and sings late.
It is the spirit of the place
Still wrung by a regret,—
Well may the stranger lingering by
Confess a sorrow yet.

Decay, and sin, and ruin,
Stare through the twilight grate,
Sad as the entrance of a vault,
With all its faded state;
The stains of tarnished gilding,
Its love-knot still untied,
And the silent statues standing fixed,
Asserting changeless pride.

And 'tis for this we toil and sweat,
And ply the sword and pen,—
Only to pass away at eve,
And be forgot of men.
Fools that we are, to gather flowers
That in our hands decay,—
To heap up mole-hills—to rear earth
Immortal,—for a day.

THE THREE TROOPERS.

During the Protectorate.

Into the Devil tavern
Three booted troopers strode,
From spur to feather spotted and splashed
With the mud of a winter road.
In each of their cups they droped a crust,
And stared at the guests with a frown;
Then drew their swords, and roared for a toast.
"God send this Crum-well-down!"

A blue smoke rose from their pistol locks,
Their sword blades were still wet;
There were long red smears on their jerkins of buff,
As the table they overset.
Then into their cups they stirred the crusts,
And cursed old London town;
Then waved their swords, and drank with a stamp,
"God send this Crum-well-down!"

The 'prentice dropped his can of beer,
The host turned pale as a clout;
The ruby nose of the toping squires
Grew white at the wild men's shout.
Then into their cups they flung the crusts,
And showed their teeth with a frown;
They flashed their swords as they gave the toast,
"God send this Crum-well-down!"

The gambler dropped his dog's-ear'd cards,
The waiting-women screamed,
As the light of the fire, like stains of blood,
On the wild men's sabres gleamed.
Then into their cups they splashed the crusts,
And cursed the fool of a town,
And leapt on the table, and roared a toast,
"God send this Crum-well-down!"

Till on a sudden fire-bells rang,
And the troopers sprang to horse;
The eldest muttered between his teeth,
Hot curses—deep and coarse.
In their stirrup cups they flung the crusts,
And cried as they spurred through town,
With their keen swords drawn and their pistols cocked,
"God send this Crum-well-down!"

Away they dashed through Temple Bar,
  Their red cloaks flowing free,
Their scabbards clashed, each back-piece shone—
  None liked to touch the three.
The silver cups that held the crusts
  They flung to the startled town,
Shouting again, with a blaze of swords,
  "God send this Crum-well-down!"

THE DANCE ROUND THE PLAGUE PIT,

THE DANCE ROUND THE PLAGUE-PIT.

'Twas when the plague was mowing
God's creatures down in heaps,
That five good men of the Temple
Awoke from their drunken sleeps,
And flask in hand, and arm in arm,
Went over the fields together,
To see the plague-pit at Mary-la-bonne,
In the bright and golden weather.

They strolled along, and at every stile
Drank to some beauty's health;
And on their knees (good Lord, to see
Such uses made of wealth!)
They pledged the king, and toasted the duke,
And hailed the Muses nine;
At every death-bell tolling
Held up to the sun the wine.

On the green grass and the cowslip flowers
The sad, calm sunshine slept;
Then one laughed out, and another sighed,
And a third man fairly wept:
For one had lost his wife and child,
And one his younger brother;
A third had fled but yesterday
From the black corse of his mother.

And when the milk-girls singing passed,
They kissed them one and all:
"We are Death's five good brothers,
Very good men and tall."
They flourished their swords and capered,
And such mad antics played:
Thinking them madmen broke away,
Fast flew each milking-maid.

'Twas very quiet in the old churchyard;
The bees in the nettle flowers
Moved not; the swallows flew
Silent between the showers.
But the chasm, black and gaping,
No cloud or sunshine lit:
It struck them cold to the heart and bone
To see the path to it.

Trodden like any highway
Over the meadow grass,
Where the dead-cart wheels by night and day,
Creak rumbling as they pass.
Through suburb road and village street,
Where playing boys stand still,
Where ploughmen stop to hear the bell,
And the white face stares from the mill.

Oh, how they laugh to see the pit
So black and deep below!
Yet above the sky was blue and clear,
And the clouds were all of a glow.
And the sunrise, bright and rosy,
Turned the distant roofs to flame;
And one looked long, with pallid cheeks,
And called the rest by name.

One of the band was grey and wan,
Another was fresh and fair,
And on his comely shoulders fell
A flood of dark brown hair.
A third was sour and sneering,
Thin lip, and cold grey eye;
The last were fat-checked gluttons,
Who dreaded much to die.

"I see the old curmudgeon,"
Cried one, with a drunken scream,
And flung his glass at the mocking eyes
Of the dead, that glisten and gleam.
"My father turned me over
To beg or rob on the road;
Good-day, old lad, with the drooping jaw,
D'ye like your new abode?"

"I swear it moves," cried one, aghast,
And let his full glass fall:
"Oh, God! if my gentle brother Will
Should be there at the bottom of all!
They writhe—egad, they struggle—
Like fish in a bellying net;
I'd rather than forty shillings
We never here had met."

"There's Chloe yonder, sleeping,
Her arms round a dead man's neck;
I call her twice, and kiss my hand,
But she comes not at my beck,
Her cheeks are still warm crimson,
The rouge is not washed off,
But her curls are lost, and the bald-pate hag
Is fit for a sexton's scoff."

The sun in the old church window
Glistened with wavering gold.
Calm praying figures carved in stone
You may through the panes behold.
The poplar slowly wavered.
And stately bent its head.
As if in homage to the wind.
Or reverence to the dead.

"Sink me!" cried one. "Canary
Will wash our dull eyes clear.
And brace our hearts. You quakers.
I can see nothing here
But a hole in the ground. and faces pale.
That seem to grin and stare.
Let us away—I feel a qualm—
There's death in the hot thick air."

"Rot me!" a third voice bellows.
And flung down a shower of wine;
"This rain'll wake the fools to life.
And make their white lips shine.
There, in a snug nook crouching.
I see my mother sits.
She's rather warped and shrunken.
She was always whining in fits."

"Born devil," cried another,
"My little Will lies there,
His blue eyes cold and faded,
Red worms in his golden hair;
Crushed by those black heaps livid,
Without a coffin or shroud,
Thrown in, dog-like, without a prayer."
The strong man wept aloud.

"Excuse me now proposing,
My gallant friends, a toast:
Here's a health to good old Rowley—
Long may he rule the roast—
To Nell and Mall, the pretty Whig,
The queen of Hearts and all!"
The sneerer knelt, and "In a grove"
Began to shout and bawl:

"We all go mad together,
If once we dare to think"—
He dashed out the wine with a shaking hand
And staring eyeballs—"Drink—
Drink till the brain grows fiery,
Till the veins run o'er with joy:
When I'm drunk, lads, then twist my neck,
And let me join my boy."

Then one pulled out the loaded dice,
And threw them on a tomb;
And another flung some greasy cards
Filched from a tavern room.
And all the while the lark rose up,
Gay singing overhead,
As if the earth were newly made,
And Adam were not dead.

"Room, room for a dance!—the sexton
With a dead-cart comes not yet—
A saraband or a minuet:
Well are we five lads met!
Come, pass the flask, and fill the cup,
Quick send the bumper round,
And drink a health to our friends and foes,
So snugly under ground."

Then round the plague-pit footing
A measure one or two,
With scarf and spangled feather,
Roses on every shoe,
All hand-in-hand, in circles,
With many a mad grimace,
Round the hole, thick black with bodies,
The drunken dancers race.

Round and round in madness
The noisy dancers flew,
Shaking off hat and feather,
Kicking off stocking and shoe;
But a quicker reel flung one man in,
Swift as a stone from a sling;
Down—down—down! In the loathsome pit
They hear the fellow sing.

He holds his glass to a dead maid's mouth,
And pledges the plague-struck men;
He shouts to his fellows far above
To fill the bowl again.
But a sudden shiver seizes him,
And he leaps at the side of the grave,
Then weeps and screams for life and help,
But none of them care to save.

They lie down flat at the brink of the pit,
And hold the red glass up,
They drink his health, and fling in his eyes
The dregs of the empty cup.
He draws his sword in madness,
Hews at the dead around,
And tries to carve out steps to climb
In the crumbling, reeking ground.

The dance renews with frantic speed,
They leap round the open pit,
Till another reels, with a cry of "*Lost!*"
Far in the womb of it.
Then at him, like a panther,
The first who lay there leaps:
They roll and fight, and curse and stab,
Tossing the dead in heaps.

Now, looking down, the dancers laugh,
And clap their hands, and sing,
Just as they'd goad a bull and dog
In the Paris Garden ring.
A groan—then perfect silence—
Both wretches are struck dead—
One smitten by the vapour,
The other with cloven head.

* * * *

The dead cart comes in the heat of noon,
The dancers were all dead,
And each had sunk like men asleep,
The earth-heap for a bed.
"Kind gentlemen," the sexton said,
"To save me trouble sure,
Food'll be all the cheaper
For so many mouths the fewer."

TOM OF TEN THOUSAND.

THERE is hard-riding Dickey,
The Lord of Mount Surrey.
Gallants in blue and gold,
Purple and murrey.
There are Jacobites, scores of 'em,
Whigs twice as many;
But Tom of Ten Thousand is
Gayest of any.

He is so tall and lithe,
Lightsome and limber,
Ready to face the gate,
Breasting the timber,
Rushing through bullfinches
Dreaded by many,
Tom of Ten Thousand is
Boldest of any.

Over the hedge and stile,
Over the paling,
Over the double fence,
Bank, brook, or railing,
Switching the rasper, sir,
Though the ground's fenny,
Tom of Ten Thousand is
Bravest of any.

Oh, but to see him, boys,
In the wood groping,
Then breaking through the bush,
Start for the open,
Over the plough and clay,
Checking so many,
Tom of Ten Thousand is
Staunchest of any.

Fording the river deep,
Swollen and rapid,
All other riding, boys,
Seeming but vapid.
Making the short cut,
That's sighed for by many,
Tom of Ten Thousand is
Fleetest of any.

Swift as a swallow,
Black Sloven's gelding,
Bred in the Grafton mews
Out of old Belding.
Light on the back of him,
Envied by many
Tom of Ten Thousand is
Swiftest of any.

After the music,
No one more willing,
Though the wood's fen, and swamp,
And the pace killing.
Cursing and spurring, sirs,
Swifter than any,
Tom of Ten Thousand is
Surest of any.

He'll be brought home at last,
With his feet foremost,
Though the heart-blood of him
Now runs the warmest.
No! coming to grief
Is the fortune of many,
But Tom of Ten Thousand is
Safest of any.

THE ORANGEMAN'S CASTLE.

THE bright flag of orange
Blew over the town,
Shone over the houses
Its "Bible and Crown."
On the third of November,
There was beating of drum,
And moving of bayonets,
Round the Castle of Crum.

In splints flew the rampart,
The casements fell in;
There were screaming and groans,
And confessions of sin;
The moat splashed with shot,
But we plied at the drum,
And the orange blew proud
On the Castle of Crum.

Hedged round with the cannon,
In a circle of fire,
Only the hotter
Grew Protestant ire.
We shot fiercely and fast,
As we beat on the drum,
At the forest of tents,
Round the Castle of Crum.

We fired; and a flame
Rose from hovel and tent;
The castle wall fell,
And the flag-staff was rent.
Their battery burst
At the sound of our drum
But the orange flew still
On the Castle of Crum.

The red shot at night
Fell on roof and on head;
We built up the loops
With the dying and dead.
Though all wounded and weak,
We still beat on the drum,
And looked at the orange
On the turrets of Crum.

We were weary and weak,
And our food was all gone;
Still we knelt down to fire
At the thick of the throng.
When far in the distance,
They beat on the drum,
And the siege it was raised,
Of the Castle of Crum.

THE FIGHT AT THE MILL-BRIDGE.

BULL-DOGS we were! down our long hair
Fell on our lace collars, costly and fair;
Swords in our sheath, we tore over the heath,
And swam the deep river, boys, blades in our teeth;
Rode with a will to the fire-flashing mill,
Full of black Orangemen, shouting for Will,
Twenty a-breast, and all gallantly dress'd,
Feather of red on the top of each crest.

"Give them the steel," cried fighting O'Neal,
"Ply them with shot till they break or they reel;"
Here are the Blues, too, just as they use,
Kilts in platoons, and the lads with the trews:
The bridge of Tyrone heard many a groan
Of dying and stabbed o'er the parapet thrown,
As twenty a-breast, we were gallantly dress'd,
Feather of red on each beaver and crest.

We fought up the road, and wherever we trode
Our hoof-prints were red, as we slash'd and we rode
We split up the door, burned to ashes the floor,
Fired till their saddles grew sloppy with gore.
Can a Jacobite lag when the Orangeman's flag
Waves in his eyes? We filled foraging bag,
Then twenty a breast, rode gallantly dress'd,
Feather of red on our beaver and crest.

THE FOPS AT THE BOYNE.

Down went hat and feather.
On poured red and blue,
The scented wigs were heading
The banner, though it flew:
Bright shone the purple pennon
All the squadrons through.

Gay as in the ring in London,
Laughing as the shot
Tore the ribbons, blue and orange,
When the fire grew hot;
"Salamanders!" cried the trooper,
"All the merry lot."

"Fire-drakes ford the Irish river,"
Panting cried Mackay;
Then the splashing and the gurgle
As the waters fly:
Some were wading to the ankle.
Some to full mid-thigh.

Such a flood of blades and feathers,
Splashed into the tide;
Walled with fire-flames, shone the river,
Red on either side;
A crash and blaze, and bragging France
Fled fast with all her pride.

Out the lace cravats were blowing,
Spotted wet with red;
Black the wigs that swept the hot steel,
On the broad chest spread:
Red the stars and red the ribbons
Flaunting on the dead.

Combing wigs and brushing velvet,
Rubbing spots from steel,
Wiping saddles, knotting bridles,
Still they led the reel,
As the gunners, laughing by,
Strain the cannon wheel.

There, amid the pale and dying,
Foamed the King's champagne;
"A toast, 'the Queen of Diamonds,'
And may she rule and reign:"
Some that are propp'd with dead men, sit
Screaming with stabs of pain.

THE JACOBITES' CLUB.

One threw an orange in the air,
And caught it on his sword;
Another crunched the yellow peel,
With his red heel on the board;
A third man cried, "When Jackson comes
Into his large estate,
I'll pave the old hall down in Kent,
With golden bits of eight."

One turning with a meaning wink,
Fast double locked the door,
Then held a letter to the fire—
It was all blank before,
But now it's ruled with crimson lines,
And cyphers odd and quaint;
They cluster round, and nod, and laugh,
As one invokes a saint,

He pulls a black wig from his head:
He's shaven like a priest;
He holds his finger to his nose,
And smiles, "The wind blows east,
The Dutch canals are frozen, sirs;
I don't say anything,
But when you play at ombre next,
Mind that I lead a king."

"Last night at Kensington I spent,
'Twas gay as any fair;
Lord! how they stared to find that bill
Stuck on the royal chair.
Some fools cried 'Treason!'—some, 'A plot!'
I slipped behind a screen,
And when the guards come fussing in,
Sat chatting with the Queen."

"I," cried a third, "was printing songs,
In a garret in St. Giles',
When I heard the watchman at the door,
And flew up on the tiles.
The press was lowered into the vault,
The types into a drain:
I think you'll own, my trusty sirs,
I have a ready brain."

A frightened whisper at the door,
A bell rings—then a shot:
"Shift, boys, the Orangers are come;
Pity! the punch is hot."
A clash of swords—a shout—a scream,
And all abreast in force;
The Jacobites, some twenty strong,
Break through and take to horse.

THE CALVES'-HEAD CLUB.

(Charles the Second's reign.)

With calf's head on a stately dish
The landlord hurried in,
A bitter smile crept round the board,
But never shout nor din;
Then wine from the cobwebb'd cellar,
Came in the wattled flask,
And the man who sat at the table end
Looked grim in a velvet mask.

With cautious step the chairman rose,
Slipp'd softly over the floor;
With a silver nail that hung from his neck
He clamp'd the oaken door.
But first they brought a roasted pike,
With a gudgeon in his jaw—
Type of the way that nations lie,
Torn in a tyrant's maw.

Then a second door they surely locked,
Threw the key in the red-hot fire.
But they spoke in murmurs soft and low,
Scarce than a whisper higher.
'Twas the thirtieth of the month, at night,
In a tavern near Whitehall,
That a man in a mask, on a pale calf's head,
A red wine-stream let fall.

The man of the mask, with a solemn air,
As an augur would have done,
Hewed in parts, with a strong broad knife,
The head, and gave each one.
They had scarcely drank three cups of wine
When open burst the door:
There was fighting at the table end,
And stabbing on the floor.

Loud cries of "Zion! sword of God!
Now hew this Baal down!"
With "Sink me! use your pistols!
And fire the cuckold town!"
The man in the mask flung down a bench
Set back unto the wall,
Flung a heavy flask at the foremost men,
And blew a silver call.

There were blood-pools mingled with the wine,
Red broken glass and swords,
Gay feathers wet, in brave men's gore.
Flapping upon the boards.
And that day week, at Tyburn tree,
Ten "calves' heads" drain'd a flask:
But they never touch'd, with villain rope.
The neck of the man in the mask.

For him they built a scaffold
On the old blood-mantled hill:
He stepped up bold, as a marriage guest
To a marriage banquet will;—
Bowed three times to the hissing crowd.
Bid the headsman do his task;
And, flinging some gold to the rolling mob,
So died the man in the mask.

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THE WHITE ROSE OVER THE WATER.

(*Edinburgh.* 1744.)

The old men sat with hats pulled down,
Their claret cups before them:
Broad shadows hid their sullen eyes,
The tavern lamps shone o'er them,
As a brimming bowl, with crystal fill'd,
Came borne by the landlord's daughter,
Who wore in her bosom the fair white rose,
That grew best over the water.

Then all leap'd up, and join'd their hands
With hearty clasp and greeting,
The brimming cups, outstretched by all,
Over the wide bowl meeting.
"A health," they cried, "to the witching eyes
Of Kate, the landlord's daughter!
But don't forget the white, white rose
That grows best over the water."

Each others' cups they touch'd all round,
The last red drop outpouring;
Then with a cry that warm'd the blood,
One heart-born chorus roaring—
"Let the glass go round, to pretty Kate,
The landlord's black-eyed daughter.
But never forget the white, white rose
That grows best over the water."

Then hats flew up and swords sprang out,
And lusty rang the chorus—
"Never," they cried, "while Scots are Scots.
And the broad Frith's before us."
A ruby ring the glasses shine
As they toast the landlord's daughter,
Because she wore the white, white rose
That grew best over the water.

A poet cried, "Our thistle's brave,
With all its stings and prickles;
The shamrock with its holy leaf
Is spar'd by Irish sickles.
But bumpers round, for what are these
To Kate, the landlord's daughter,
Who wears at her bosom the rose as white,
That grows best over the water?"

They dash'd the glasses at the wall,
No lip might touch them after;
The toast had sanctified the cups
That smashed against the rafter;
Then chairs thrown back, they up again,
To toast the landlord's daughter.
But never forgot the white, white rose
That grew best over the water.

THE FIGHT IN THE HAWKING FIELD.

Pipes blowing, drums beating, colours flying, cries and laughter,
Ribbons driving, bells jingling, merry cheering fore and after,
Mad spurring, hot whipping, and all because Sir William Ray
Has matched his dun mare Sorel against Sir Robert's bay.

Hawks whistling, scarves blowing, horns blasting, hither, thither,
Horses neighing, kicking, fretting, at the gall upon their wither,
Strap-pulling, stirrup-lowering, eyes looking at the sky,
When, with a blast of trumpets, they let the falcon fly,

Cloud-piercing, wind-scorning, lightning-pinioned, flew the falcon,
High soaring, proud of plumage, keen-talon'd for the hawking.
There was whooping, yelling, shouting, because Sir Robert swore,
A braver bird, from gentle wrist, flew never up before.

White against the dark sky, all a-smother with grey clouds,
When the sullen mists of autumn hung upon the woods in shrouds;—
Rose the falcon piercing heaven, arrow-swift, and fiery eyed,
High above the swelling vapours and the sunset's burning tide.

Drums beating, pipes blowing, trumpet-banners, how they fluttered,
Pages gambolled, ladies whispered, falconers looked black and muttered;
And all because Sir Robert Grey drew off his falcon's hood,
And flung him up to catch his mate, above the Castle wood.

Now above the tallest poplar, now above the last
red cloud—
"Ah! should not any gentleman of such a bird be
proud?"
Now on his towering prey he falls, a smiting
thunder-bolt,
And struck him in a bloody leap, stone dead upon
the holt.

"Ill-doing!" cruel!" "knavish!" "foul-playing!"
cry a dozen,
"Fall upon them!" "this a wager?" "draw!"
"don't let the villains cozen!"
"Scurvy practice!" "hear me!" "fell him!"
"listen!" "tap the cuckold's blood!"
So cried the rabble, undulating, like a spring-tide
at the flood.

Then flew out in face of heaven, scarcely less than
thirty swords
In a circle round Sir Robert, who grew angry at
these frauds.
Horns blowing, drums beating, horsemen hurried
in and out,
Calm hands were laid on hasty weapons, as the
murmur grew a shout.

There was pawing and curvetting, snatches at the
helmet laces;
There was slashing off of feathers, long gloves
flung in troopers' faces.
Pulling strong men from their saddles, gashes
bleeding at their breast—
Groans and screaming, cries and clamours, running
east and running west.

In among the press and struggle rode Sir Robert
on his sable,
He had hand on every gullet, and he swore down
all the Babel.
When he struck, flew out the crimson, on the satin
and the lace;
When he frown'd, a coward pallor spread on every
brawler's face.

Tearing trumpet from a villain puffing out his
swollen cheek,
Striking down a dozen weapons, stopping one who
would fain speak,
Spurring, pushing, till curvettings bore him to Sir
William's side;
Then he smote him on the jaw-bone in his anger
and his pride.

Bridle-cutting, there is stabbing, rapiers flashing
keen and deadly,
Arrows flying, bullets ringing, swords dripping,
bright and redly,
Beaver-chopping, wound-making, steel-crossing,
clishing, clashing,
Gun-loading, match-lighting, yellow light of sul-
phur flashing.

When the melee broke and scatter'd, pages dragg'd
away the dead;
There were feathers wet and crimson, there were
trappings burnt and red.
On a bier of boughs and hurdles they bore Sir
William Ray,
As night came down, a dreary pall, and closed the
hunting day.

THE GENTLEMAN IN BLACK.

[King William the Third's death was occasioned by the horse he was riding stumbling at a mole-hill. This mole became afterwards famous as a Jacobite toast, by the name of 'The Little Gentleman in Black Velvet.']

THE club had met, the cups stood full,
The chairman stirr'd the bowl;
The bottle, as it circling flew,
Gave wings to every soul.
"'Tis *Orange Boven*," that they cried,
When a voice at the chairman's back
Said, "I pray you drink with three times three
'The Gentleman in Black.'"

The chairman filled his glass again,
And each one chink'd his spoon;
The fiddlers in the corner sat,
Stopp'd half way in their tune;
The *Boven*, and the Kentish fire,
The wainscot echoed back;
When silence came, the voice replied,
"The Gentleman in Black."

Then every eye was turned to see
What the intruder meant.
He was a man with shaggy brows,
And long nose hook'd and bent—
"Death, devil, or a doctor!" cried
The shrewdest of the pack;
The stranger merely smil'd, and said.
"The Gentleman in Black."

"An honest man, who digs as well,
As sexton, sand or clay,
And throws up heaps—a miner good
By night as well as day;
He's not a friend to Dutch or Whigs.
And Holland would let pack:
Still, drink a glass, my gallant sirs,
To the 'Little Man in Black.'"

Sallow and grim the speaker stood,
A stranger to them all,
He had a muffler round his mouth,
And never let it fall.
They drank the toast to humour him,
He laugh'd at the chairman's back,
Then glided out, as twenty roared,
"The Gentleman in Black."

He coldly smiled as he passed out,
His lips moved with a sneer;
The wrinkles crept about his brow,
When they began to cheer.
The chairman said, "A riddle this,
I'm not upon the track,
But ne'ertheless, here's wishing well
To the Gentleman in Black."

An hour had gone: a pale-faced man
Ran in, not greeting any,
Said, "Friends, I bring but sorry news.
And what will stagger many:
The king at noon was thrown and hurt
As Hampton Park he crossed.
He is just dead." "What, dead!" they screamed;
"Our cause and England's lost!"

"What lam'd the horse?" a dozen cry—
"A mole-hill in the way—
It stumbled, and the king was thrown—
He's now six foot of clay."
"A mole, *I see!*" the chairman foamed,
"I'm on the villain's track;
And this is why he made us toast
The Gentleman in Black."

OLD SIR WALTER.

A Story of 1734.

STOUT Sir Walter was old but hearty:
A velvet cap on his long grey hair,
A full white rose at his gold-laced button:
Many were laughing, but none looked gayer.

Such a beast was his jet black hunter,
Silver-spotted with foam and froth,
Brawny in flank and fiery-blooded,
Stung by the spur to a curbless wrath!

Gaily blowing his horn, he scrambled
Over the stone wall four feet two:
See saw over the old park railing,
Shaking the thistle-head rich with dew.

A long black face the sour Whig huntsman
Pulled, when he saw Sir Walter come
Trotting up gay by the oak wood cover.
Why when he cheered did they all sit dumb?

Why when he flung up his hat and shouted,
"God save King George!" they bawling cried,
As a Justice, drawing a long-sealed parchment,
Rode up grim to Sir Walter's side.

"In King George's name, arrest him, lieges!
This is the villain who fought at Boyne:
He sliced the feather from off my beaver.
And ran his sword twice into my groin."

Then out whipp'd blades: the horns they sounded,
The field came flocking in thick and fast,
But Sir Walter flogged at the barking rabble,
And through them all like a whirlwind pass'd.

"A hundred guineas to seize the traitor!"
Cried the Justice, purple and white with rage,
Then such a spurring, whipping, and flogging,
Was never seen in the strangest age.

The hunter whipped off Spot and Fowler,
Viper and Fury, and all the pack,
And set them fast, with their red tongues lolling
And white teeth fix'd, on Sir Walter's track.

Loud on the wind came blast of bugle,
All together the hounds gave tongue,
They swept like a hail-storm down by the gibbet,
Where the black rags still in the cold storm hung.

The rain cut faces like long whip lashes,
The wind blew strong in its wayward will.
And powdering fast, the men and horses
Thundering swept down Frampton Hill.

There half the grooms at last pull'd bridle,
Swearing 'twould ruin their bits of blood:
Three Whig rogues flew out of the saddle,
And two were plumped in the river mud.

Three men stuck to the leading rebel;
The first was a Whig lord, fat and red,
The next a yellow-faced lean attorney,
And the last a Justice, as some one said.

Slap at the fence went old Sir Walter,
Slap at the ditch by the pollard-tree,
Crash through the hazels, over the water,
And wherever he went, there went the three.

Into the hill-fence broke Sir Walter,
Right through the tangle of branch and thorns,
Swish'd the rasper up by the windmill,
In spite of the cries and blowing of horns.

Lines of flames trailed all the scarlet
  Streaming, the dogs half a mile before,
Whoop! with a cry all after Sir Walter,
  Driving wildly along the shore.

Over the timber flew old Sir Walter,
  Light as a swallow, sure and swift,
For his sturdy arm and his "pull and hustle"
  Could help a nag at the deadest lift.

Off went his gold-laced hat and bugle,
  His scarlet cloak he then let fall,
And into the river spurr'd old Sir Walter,
  Boldly there, in the sight of all.

There was many a sore on back and wither,
  Many a spur that ran with red,
But none of them caught the stout Sir Walter,
  Though they counted of horses sixty head.

There was many a fetlock cut and wounded,
  Many a hock deep lam'd with thorns,
Many a man that two years after
  Shuddered to hear the sound of horns.

But on the fallow, the long clay fallow,
  Foundered his black mare, Lilly Lee,
And Sir Walter sat on the tough old saddle,
  Waiting the coming of all the three.

Never such chase of stag or vermin,
Along the park pale, in and out;
On they thundered, fast over the railing,
Driving the fence in splints about.

The first he shot with his long steel pistol,
The second he slew with his Irish sword,
The third he threw in the brook, and mounted
Quick on the steed of the fat Whig lord.

Then off to the ship at the nearest harbour,
Gallop'd Sir Walter, sure and fleet.
He died, 'tis true, in an old French garret,
But his heart went true to the latest beat.

* * * * *

A white rose, stifled and very sickly,
Pined for air at the window-sill,
But the last fond look of the brave old trooper
Was fixed on the dying emblem—still,

All alone in the dusky garret,
He turn'd to the flower with a father's pride,
"God save King James!" the old man murmured,
"God—save—the—King!" he moaned and died.

THE JACOBITE ON TOWER HILL.

He tripp'd up the steps with a bow and a smile,
Offering snuff to the chaplain the while,
A rose at his button-hole that afternoon—
'Twas the tenth of the month, and the month it was June.

Then shrugging his shoulders he look'd at the man
With the mask and the axe, and a murmuring ran
Through the crowd, who, below, were all pushing to see
The gaoler kneel down, and receiving his fee.

He look'd at the mob, as they roared, with a stare,
And took snuff again with a cynical air.
"I'm happy to give but a moment's delight
To the flower of my country agog for a sight."

THE JACOBITE ON TOWER HILL.

Then he look'd at the block, and with scented cravat
Dusted room for his neck, gaily doffing his hat,
Kiss'd his hand to a lady, bent low to the crowd,
Then smiling, turn'd round to the headsman and bow'd.

"God save King James!" he cried bravely and shrill,
And the cry reach'd the houses at foot of the hill,
"My friend, with the axe, *à votre service*," he said;
And ran his white thumb 'long the edge of the blade.

When the multitude hissed he stood firm as a rock;
Then kneeling, laid down his gay head on the block,
He kiss'd a white rose, in a moment 'twas red
With the life of the bravest of any that bled.

THE NIGHT SURPRISE.

In the drift and pother of scud and hail,
When the wind drove strong at our rain-drenched back,
I and some seventy more stout lads
Picked from Newcastle's mad-cap pack,
I and some seventy devil-may-cares
Rode to Bristol—and then rode back.

Through the sleet and darkness, and wind and hail,
Such storm as follows a devil behind,
Our fellows all backed and breasted with steel,
Our swords new ground—the way of the wind
Bore down on Bristol, seeing a light
Wave three times clear at the steeple blind.

Through wind and struggle, and blast and blow,
Through river that brimmed with a winter's rain,
We spurred post haste with our carbines cocked,
Down the avenue, up the lane,
Over the moor, and round by the mill,—
Never a thought of shot or slain.

"Dark, dark, dark, and the watch all drunk:
Caught in a trap, the sots are nicked
Off with the lock—the widows may weep.
The postern is open. What! tricked, boys, tricked?
Look to your matches, I smell a rat;
Hammer the town gate, fast, fast, fast,
And take the white rose out of your hat."

"Run like devils, the city is up,
You clink that fellow over the head;
Fire the houses round by the bridge,
And give the rascals a dose of lead;
Spur, or we're lost—a plunge—a leap
Over the river—the fools look black:"
And this is the way my seventy lads
Rode to Bristol, and then rode back.

THE DEATH OF MARLBOROUGH.

The sun shines on the chamber wall,
The sun shines through the tree,
Now, though unshaken by the wind,
The leaves fall ceaselessly;
The bells from Woodstock's steeple
Shake Blenheim's fading bough.
"This day you won Malplaquet,"—
"Aye, something then, but now!"

They lead the old man to a chair,
Wandering, pale and weak;
His thin lips move—so faint the sound
You scarce can hear him speak.
They lift a picture from the wall,
Bold eyes and swelling brow;
"The day you won Malplaquet,"—
"Aye, something then, but now!"

They reach him down a rusty sword,
In faded velvet sheath:
The old man drops the heavy blade,
And mutters 'tween his teeth;
There's sorrow in his fading eye,
And pain upon his brow;
"With this you won Malplaquet,"—
"Aye, something then, but now!"

Another year, a stream of lights
Flows down the avenue;
A mile of mourners, sable clad,
Walk weeping two by two:
The steward looks into the grave
With sad and downcast brow;
"This day he won Malplaquet,
Aye, something then, but now!"

THE JACOBINS' RISING.

THERE'S a light in Rooknest turret.
And a flame on the Beacon Hill;
Look! there went up the signal fire
From the tower at Wetherby mill;
From the steeple on Vivian Moor,
Hurrah! for the spirt of red.
If I guess right, no Jacobin
Will spend to-night in bed.

Look! that's on the cliff at Fowy.
Answering one at sea:
Did you hear that gun-shot, Willy?
If I were not eighty-three,
I'd burn our ricks to spread it
Round all the Devon coast.
Bring me my old buff jerkin;—
These Dutchmen rule the roost.

Was that a horn? a gnat could hum
As loud indeed as that.
Wake Jack, and Ned, and Harry,
With gun, and sword, and bat,
Leave me to feed the falcons,
And every man to horse;
For twenty thousand Jacobins
To-night must meet in force.

"Ah! here is Severn riding lightly,
Redfern, gay, and arch, and sprightly,
Rough old Wilcox, stern and knightly,
With the Cornish men in blue;
Dallasy, the proud and trusty;
Willoughby, the young and lusty!
Gifford with his corslet rusty,
All in groups of two and two.

See the yeomen, lords, and vassals,
Noblemen from grey old castles:
Grey and Fosbrook, Hale and Lascelles,
Thirty barons from the Trent—
Duffield, Thornton, Hull, and Russel—
Iron champions in a jostle,
With their gilded trains, who hustle
Every man that Devon sent.

Only here and there a cripple,
Red-nosed sot who loved his tipple,
Or an angler watching ripple,
  Lingered when the cry went up.
Every farmer left his village,
Every ploughman left his tillage,
Every bird-boy, keen for pillage,
  Drained the ready stirrup cup.

Then through old Cornwall's duchy
  The cry ran "Lads to horse,"
And twenty thousand Jacobins
  Rose all at once in force.

THE WHITE ROSE.

At the "Lobster," in Southwark,
Ten orange cloaks met;
The chairman, a marquis,
At head of them sat.
The Dutch nobles stared
With a coldness that froze
All but the gentleman
Wearing the rose.

He sat with his claret,
And never spoke word;
He smiled at the threats
And oaths that he heard,
Till one, flinging his glove,
Asked what weapons he chose:
Then up leaped the gentleman
Wearing the rose.

Down went the feather
That headed the swords.
Down went the white wigs
Of blue-ribbon'd lords.
The red heels in terror
Of buffets and blows,
Fled from that gentleman
Wearing the rose.

CULLODEN.

BRIGHT both in sun and shade,
Shone the brave white cockade—
White as the snow that laid
On dark Culloden.
How the Macgregors came,
Faster than running flame,
Putting the Grants to shame,
Though so down-trodden.

Looking along the line,
I saw the fiery eyne
Of the Macdonalds shine
At the clan Frasers.
They pulled their bonnets down,
With a black, cruel frown,
Firm on their matted crown
(Swords sharp as razors).

Each one his claymore-sheath
Threw on the purple heath,
And with dirk 'tween his teeth
  Glared at the cannon,
Reapers at early dawn,
Standing beside the corn,
With our keen sickles drawn,
  That day we ran on.

As the wind reaps the pines,
So through the Saxon lines,
Where the bright bayonet shines,
  Burst we in anger,
Spite of the fiery hail,
All our grim faces pale,
With a loud pibroch wail,
  Drove our mad clangour.

Loud rang the war pipes then,
Cheering the Cameron men
Thinking of lake and glen
  'Mid the fire fountains,
Waved the white ribbons all,
Round the king's colours tall,
Answered the bugle call,
  Horns of the mountains.

Athol-men, tall and lithe,
Each with a sweeping scythe;
Yet they were but a tithe
Of the brave rebels.
Waded knee deep in blood
Through the hot, burning flood,
On through a flaming wood,
As their strength trebles.

Barehead in wind and sun,
We prayed to only one.
Low the deep murmurs run
Of the Dhun Wassels,
Felled in great swathes, like grain
Layed by the flooding rain:
Tide after tide in vain,
Drove on the vassals.

As from grey Catdicham,
Swoops on the sportive lamb,
Spite of its bleating dam,
Eagle-dark pinions,
Scaring the shepherd's child
With its glance keen and wild,
Then soaring blood-defil'd
To its dominions.

As when the flooded rills
Pour down between the hills,
And the lone valley fills
With awe and wonder.
When on before them fast
Flies the red lightning blast,
Through the lit pines aghast
Howls the deep thunder

Stormy the pipers blew,
Snow white the ribbons flew,
Deeper the fury grew,
Madder than Flodden,
Piercing through heart and brain
Beating like tempest rain,
Drove the red hurricane
O'er dark Culloden

We did all that mere steel could do,
Against a Saxon crew,
Arm'd with the fire that flew;
Lightning to blast us,
Swifter than eagles' wing,
From the dark rocky spring,
Where the wild foxgloves cling,
Athol men past us.

One line was swept away,
Still to that fatal fray,
Laughing like boy at play,
Drove on Glengarry.
Pistol in bloody hand,
Target thrown on the sand,
Macbane, with swinging brand,
Did not long tarry.

Banked up with rows of dead,
Calmly as on a bed,
With his gashed forehead red,
Sat Angus the piper.
Knitted his brows, and pale
As seaman who sees a sail
Split in the sudden gale,
Still growing riper.

When Keppoch saw them fly,
Tears filled his burning eye—
"Sons of my tribe," his cry,
"Am I forsaken?"
Fast on the bayonets then,
Hewed he down flag and men,
Fierce as from rocky den,
The wolf o'ertaken.

Athol and Cameron men,
Children of Lake and Fen;
Would we could see again
"John of the Battles!"
O for the stormy plaids!
O for the rush of blades,
Where through the rocky glades
Fast the stream prattles.

Round his old sire a son
Threw his stabbed arm, the one
With a blood torrent run,
Shielding from danger,
Praying to Jesus there
To save his hoary hair,
So he might anywhere
Die with the stranger.

One by his chieftain knelt,
Holding his girdled belt;
I saw the hot tears melt,
Shed on the dying.
Then with his broad claymore,
Reeking and wet with gore,
Slew he some three or four
Of the fools flying.

As when the granite blocks,
Stricken by lightning shocks,
Breaks from the Lomond rocks:
  Riven asunder,
Smoke down the gorge and pass,
Shivered like brittle glass,
Sweeping down pines like grass
  With a hoarse thunder.

Crimson like driven flame,
On the red tartans came,
What could their fury tame?
  Not steel or iron.
Cutting a bloody lane—
Red path for serf and thane—
Strode the grey Allan Bane
  Through thy environ.

Sullen some stand apart,
I saw the tear-drops start,
Wrung from the bleeding heart,
  Mourning lost honour.
"Better go mad and weep—
Better grave twelve foot deep—
Better eternal sleep—
  Than this dishonour."

Waiting and baring breast.
Gaze turned towards the west;
On their sheathed arms they rest.
  Eyes staring redly.
Gnashing with rage their teeth,
Sword in the sluggish sheath—
Dead on the bloody heath,
  Slain in the medley.

Wounded men crawl and die,
Striking with glazing eye,
Deadly their grasp and cry,
  Stabbing the German.
Clasping the bayonets, they
Strove to hew out a way,
Leaping, like hounds at bay,
  On the red vermin.

Old men with blooded hair,
And a half-maddened stare,
Breaking through smoke and glare,
  Cried, "Ho, for heaven!
Shall our brave mountaineers
Fly from mere cannoneers?
Who one lost battle fears?
  Bruce lost eleven."

Tartans in waves of green,
Moved like a forest seen,
Wind-tossed the hills between,
  When the storms blacken.
Plumes on the bonnets shook,
Each one his target took,
Trampling with earnest look
  Over the bracken.

One by his brother fell,
I saw him gasp to tell
Name of her loved so well.
  Vainly his brother
Staunch'd with the strips of plaid,
Stab from the bayonet blade—
(Youngest of all that raid
  Far from his mother.)

Feeble and in the rear,
Yet without sign of fear,
Stood a blind Highland seer,
  Allan Mackinnon.
"To-day for revenge," he cried,
"To-morrow for tears of pride;"
Then with a leap he died,
  Crushed by the cannon.

Broad stretch'd the moor away,
Far to the east it lay,
Swelling like waves at play,
  On the Firth yonder.
High springs the Ross-shire hill,
Silver'd with line of rill;
Sea, sky, and mountain fill
  All minds with wonder.

DRAMATIC MONOLOGUES.

THE WITCH'S CHAMPION.

Look here! see how I spill this wine,
  Crushing the crystal with my heel;
So his heart's blood shall run to waste,
  And his clay-house with griding steel
I will deface—and why? because the beast
  Dares to defame my lady. Sot!
He says her fame is spotted black;
  Who says it, lies; I say 'tis not.

Look how I slice this falcon's neck;
  Let knaves beware, the wolf's at bay;
Stand from the door—here, Watkin, ho!
  Plant back to back, and chop a way.
He says—it makes me froth with rage—
  Her white hand has a stain. The sot!
I know her pure as her babe's soul.
  Who says she's false, he lies; I say she's not.

O bring my helmet, visor up—
  My eyes are dimmer than they were.
Here, Ralph, my heaviest tilting-spear!
  And grind it sharp, Ralph—have a care:
For I will lop him limb to limb,
  And throw the flesh to dogs. The sot!
The drunken beast to call her false!
  Who says it, lies; I say she's not.

A witch, too! 'cause her golden bird
  Flew to her bosom at her call—
A witch! because last holy night
  She was found praying in the hall.
O devils! bring that toughest axe
  With the oak shaft, and give me—Sot!
She's purer than the new-sprung flower.
  Who calls her witch? I say she's not.

She liked me not; "Old Steady Dick"
  Was my name at their spinning-wheel.
I know she shudder'd when I rose
  From table, clashing in my steel;
And yet to save one golden hair,
  I'd give my blood. Oh, fevers rot
The villain's tongue that called her false!
  Who says it, lies; I say she's not.

Girth me up tight look—wax the shaft
Of the steel axe. No—blood shall glue
This hand to hilt. What's that? Who laughed?
Can see him coming! Call the Jew,
And bid him burn the bond he signed.
But one debt now, then red dew robs
His tongue and jaw, to call her false.
Who says it, lies; I say she's not.

And he, the husband, simple fool,
Led by this buzzard's poison tongue.
O God! now on my knees, but this—
Once let his throat be clutched and wrung.
Once foot to foot, and eye to eye—
In lowest hell, he'll roll and rot—
She pure as seraphim. She false?
Who dare say that? I say she's not.

Where's William, he who kissed her shoe.
And kept the paring of her nail?
Where Robert, who, with bow and smile,
Ran for her swift as April gale?
All gone! all faithless—not one left!
Only old Dick—she feared so—sot!—
What, devil! down to hell—down, down!—
Who says she's false? He lies! she's not.

God has adjudged her pure. Look, fool!
Your sinless lady calm and white:
Dead—dead! her soul has flown to rest—
Gone to the angels of light—
And here the toad I crush, his viperous mouth
Silent at last—so let him rot.
Who says this holy saint was ever false?
He lies, lies, lies, for she was not.

Perish thy gold—I want no fees—
Or give it to the priest to sing
Masses for this dead angel's soul,
Where the old bell may jog and ring.
Good-bye, old Roger, I'm bound over sea;
Yes, Cyprus 'gainst the Turk—O sot,
And see so dear a lady dead. Farewell!
Once more, who calls her false? I proved her not.

THE CONVENT DRUDGE.

(*Temp. Alfred.*)

No, do not jeer; my brain is old and strained
With many years of trouble, so 'twill not bend
To these new labours. This King David psalm
I cannot learn; and when I reach the end,
The prelude I forget. But do not, brothers, mock,
I know the chapel boys can run it off
While I am tracing every letter's rim
With my chopped finger; but yet do not scoff,
My sense is dull—this horny eye grows dim.

I was a sea-king once, and drove the keel
Through sand and wrack, and now the convent's drudge,
I split the firing-wood, and wash the bowl,
And clean the Abbot's horse, and do not grudge,
Knowing dear Jesus died upon the tree
For serf as well as jarl, although the prior
Smite my thin cheek because I try to sing,
And do it hoarsely, putting out the quire.

Sometimes, all weary with this toil of brain,
I let my psalter drop, and fall asleep
Under the Abbot's desk, and dream of seas
Frothed white with the rough wind that ploughs so deep
Round Arrow Point. The organ's like the breeze,
I start and shout, "Luff, luff;" and a rough blow
Drives me awake, and then the broad sunshine
Falls on me, and when I wake, as if in heaven,
They send me out to prune the hill-side vine.

And when I sit me down beside the stub,
To prune, and rest, and try to read the hymn,
The chapel boys draw round and point and mock:
And if I chase them from the copse-wood dim,
Sing their lewd songs, and call me "Danish churl,"
"Ale-bibbing Dane," and "Pirate," bid me go
And watch the wreck, or strip the dying serf.
They steal my meal, and give me mock and blow.

Yet I am happy when the windows shine,
And the strong organ thunders jar the quire,
When the angelic voices soar and rise,
And perfume rises from the incense fire;

Then sound, and scent, and colours fill the sense
With Paradise delights, and David's songs
Go up and cleave the sky, and seraphs come
And fill the place, and mingle with the throngs.

"The Danes!" what! Norsemen clashing at the gate?
Thank God, I die a saint. Bring me the axe
I threw by when I sought this convent gate:
Where are those scoffers now? I pay the tax,
And lead the sally. Soon a martyr's blood,
Shall save the shrine. Look out the stoutest men,
And arm. Quick, quick, bring out the good king's crown,
The relics, and the image; to his den
We will drive Odin down—ye pagans, down.

THE SUICIDE IN DRURY-LANE.

(1856.)

"DONE!" the tired sexton said, and dug his spade
A foot deep in the plashy London clay.
"What's his name?—Mitchell. Oh, ah! cut his
throat;
Shovel him in, of course, the usual way.
What was his age?—Eighteen. Why, what a fool!
O drat these nettles, how the beggars sting!
You haven't got a sixpence? When I've done,
An' O be joyful's what I always sing.

The *Jolly Brewer's* handy—so it is.
O curse this drizzle! how I reek and sweat!
The ground, you see's so greasy hereabout,
For we are over-crowded—three deep;—yet
I will be bound the parish would find room,
If one-third Leper-lane were to hop off.
Look at this skull, it's my old friend, the groom's.

No plumes you see to-night, I don't suppose,
Only a black box, and just half a prayer.
No one to cry and sob, or watch the dust
I fling, a dratting of the damp night air.
O Lord! this rheumatiz! damn suicides!
Don't they know wrong from right? Bah! cutting
throats—
And costs the parish something, too, besides."

HOW THE PASTY WAS POISONED.

(*Temp. Elizabeth.*)

This is the pasty for the wedding dinner,
The high-wall'd pasty lordly in its dish;
Cupids dance round the crust, as I'm a sinner.—
The cook's away, scraping the spangled fish,
Say that I lift the paste and add a spice;—
No harm, I trow—bad seasoning's a vice.

Ah, ah! the supper!—he who wrong'd us, smiling.
Bowing, the grace cup lifted in his hand,
The foolish guests by turns with grins beguiling,
And counting to himself the dowry land.
Of course, red blushing at the eyes that gaze,
The bride beside him with his sword knot plays.

Now for next morning, when the music comes
To wake the pair—they must play very loud;
Away with fluting whistles! send for drums;
Beat till your hearts ache, foolish piping crowd.
At the gilt chamber door the varlets wait,
And wonder why the couple sleep so late.

Never was pasty season'd quite so well;
Ten grains of *stibium* smear'd the venison round,
Never was fool so neatly sent to hell.
Snug goes my master's rival under ground—
Now, then, for home—and fully worth the gold.
Twenty-four angels by the steward told.

He weigh'd the spices with such anxious skill,
In his glass scales upon the furnace shelf;
Could not have done it with more kindly will,
Though measuring doses for his lady's self.
He smiled (his mouth, not eyes) when he wrapp'd up
This precious drug, and pointed to a cup.

Now for confession, just to take the taste
Out of my mouth, then to old Darcy's mask,
To talk all night, as the sweet tapers waste,
Of poor Trelawney's sudden death, and ask
If the thing's true?—for silly stories fly
From tongue to tongue, then hear the thing, and sigh.

THE SUCCORY WATER.

(Louis Quatorze.)

WHY who could fancy now Montesson there—
She with that fairy little crimson shoe,
Puffed round with swans' down, balanced with such care
On tiptoe of her dancing foot—but two
Or three short minutes—only when the hour
The gilded cupid touched—with half shut eye,
Dropped something deadly in the succory jug,
Falling back languid—and I watching by.

Thinking no eye was on her—painted whore!
Now by her love-knot hanging to my sword,
And by this favour stolen from her curls;
I will disclose it to her wittol lord:
Yes, by her glove, still faint with wanton scent,
I will prick out this viper from her lair,
Unmask her in the full flush of the court,
Brand the lewd harlot on her whitewashed cheek,
And open out this plague-den to the air.

But first unmask her; see, she shams asleep.
Her rounded brow propped by her dainty hand.
Fool! I remember when to buy one kiss
I would have beggared self of house and land:
But now, ah, well! there have been other fools!
Cæsar, for instance:—Sampson—yes, well, well!
Poison for me, to cure my doting:—Jules.
Bring me a flambeau when I clash the bell.

Now for a rough hand on her velvet arm:
Awake my lady—I am off to court.
This succory water's curdled. Rosa lapped,
And died five minutes since. Ah! harlot caught.
No tricks for me: how pale the witch's face—
Cold, dead. Ring the alarm bell—she has escaped.
Death has tricked Justice! cut her boddice lace:
Bring water; beautiful devil, how she's shaped!

SAVED!

(Temp. George I.)

I CANNOT hope to win her—I, uncouth,
With the stain'd scarlet ever on my back,
And voice all hoarse with bawling to the dogs
Through the thick covert—I, good lord, alack!
Not fit for such as her, and when I touch
Her hand and wring it like a farmer's paw,
She strikes me with her fan and cries, "Have done!"
And I am drunk, or stammer out, "Why, law!"

She flung the fox brush in my stupid teeth,
That I thought trophy for a queen to wear;
I blew my horn to please her, and she cried,
'For that fool's flute!'—I frowned—O ass and bear,
Look at them riding now across the chase,
How close their cheeks are—God! a loaded gun
And I could stop that fooling. Curse his teeth!
How white they shine, a twinkling in the sun.

Sound, for I see them just upon the crown
Of the park hill, and I must sally out
Quick ere the scent is found. A horse, a horse!
The fire-hot chestnut. Ah! they wheel about;
Now for a burst full in the trooper's face;
'Tis but a bullet sting, and then a groan,
Tell her I kiss'd this rose before I went—
And pray her come to see my burial place.

I'll save the Jacobin—for life to me,
Is a suck'd orange that I fling away.
They may be happy—she will be the heir,
And when the trouble's gone, he'll have his way,
And wed the prettiest maid in Rutlandshire.—
Well, sirs, to covert; give the horse a lash;
We ride as at a bulfinch. Yoicks! hurrah!
Yoicks! tally ho! yoicks! forward—now the crash.

To face a rasper, man, or breast a gate;
To leap a yawner, clear a slapping brook,
We yield to none in Rutland—but a dunce
Am I in all this cursed dance and music book,
Fal lal and ribbons!—know not how to smile.
When I am hurt or stung, and do not know
How to well thank the fool who bruis'd my heart,
But long to tear his throat and blow for blow.

Troopers, by heaven! two, four, six—yes, eight,
And all fast coming through the avenue
After young Vernon—I'll be sworn, he's trapp'd.
Not much love lost, all know, between us two.
Yet still he loves her, and she him to death.
What, then, this white rose that the fellow dropp'd.
She kiss'd it first just at the staircase foot;—
I stick it in my button-hole, pull down my hat,
Ride hotly out, they challenge me and shoot.

THE UNJUST STEWARD

(*Temp. James I.*)

Am I not master here? Whose inn is this?
Are not my horses and my dogs without?
Am I not lord of all the Compton lands?
The mad Sir Francis dead, this year about,
Away at Venice, or else with the Turk—
What means this insolence of yours, Sir Host?
You quit this house at Lent: I'll not be chid
With frowns. We'll see who rules the roast.

Nothing to vex me? Not his puling wife,
Who mopes and pines because I choose to chide?
Not in those lying varlets, bound and signed
To cheat, steal, drink, and fool in lust and pride?
Why are these rascals silent? You, sir, you
Toss me a pottle off, and clear your throat,
And tell me who it was who dared cry "Jew."

Out on these squirting cups, give me a jug.
What, sir, not drink! here, drawer, pour out wine;
And look, you gallants, if he's forced to hug,
This bear is rough; take care who pays the fine.
Here, lads, to you, down on your knees and drink.
Villain the sack is limed! I quarrelsome?
I hate to see a lubber try and think
Before canary's made him ripe or dumb.

And Roger run and bring your lady here;
I want to try her mettle. If she dare
Refuse to come, drag her by force—and look!
You wait not to stick jewels in her hair;
I'll have the dame obedient, like this dog.
Who laughs?—and bring us out another cup,
And pile the fire on; shall a Compton squire
Be treated like a knave, and put it up.

Who's that dark scullion frowning at the door,
With his hat o'er his eyes? Marry! come now,
Are gentle folks to be snubbed out by clowns?
Here, Walter, rap the varlet on the brow.
Who dares to laugh? Look, you, I slit his throat,
Or cut his thumbs off. No, I didn't ask
Was the door tight: that rogue there in the coat
Of blue and silver I will now unmask.

Glove in my face! here, Bellamy, my sword,
By a clown, too—why fire and thunder crack?
Who am I?—where am I?—who is this
That beards me? devils—squinting mongrel pack!
Blood wipes the scar out. What, put up a scoff!
There goes the table, now the field is clear;
I'll tap his heart—the doddy-peck—the ass—
Unmask, fair sir. *Good God! my master here!*

MISCELLANEOUS.

DICK O' THE DIAMOND.

THE lad with the bonny blue feather
That bore away jewel and ring;
That struck down Sir Walter de Tracey
Before the proud eyes of the king.
Tawney-yellow his doublet of satin,
His hat was looped up with a stone,
His scarf was a flutter of crimson,
As he leaped like a prince on his roan.

The heralds their trumpets of silver
Blew loud at the multitude's shout;
I saw the brave charger curvetting,
As Richard wound prancing about;
But silent they grew when Sir Tracey
(A gold-mine could scarce glitter more)
Gallop'd into the lists, cold and sullen,
Fool! eyeing the jewels he wore.

There were diamonds on hat and on feather,
Diamonds from crest unto heel,
Collars of diamonds and sapphires
Hiding the iron and steel.
His housings were silver and purple,
All blazon'd with legend and crest,
But seamed by the sword of no battle,
For Sir Walter de Tracey loved rest.

The lad with the bonny blue feather
Was a page and a gentleman born;
But Sir Walter, a knight of the garter,
Curl'd his thin lip in anger and scorn—
"Shall he who, the lion at Bullen,
Help'd trample the tall Fleur-de-lys,
Compete for the prize of the jewel
With such a mere stripling as this?"

"No, no!" cried the crowd of his varlets,
Waving with velvet and gold,
All shaking their colours and ribbons,
And tossing their banner's fringed fold.
To heighten the insolent clamour,
The drummers, beginning to beat,
Bid the trumpets sound quick for the mounting—
Never sound to my ear was so sweet.

For the varlets were flocking round Richard.
To hurry him down from his seat;
I saw him look fierce at the rabble,
Disdaining to back or retreat.
That moment the drums and the trumpets
Made all the proud ears of them ring,
As slowly, his cheek flushed with anger,
Rode into the tilt-yard—the King.

Pale grew the lips of the vassals,
Sir Tracey turned colour, and frown'd.
But the people, with scorn of oppression,
Hissed, and the hisses flew round:
Then the king waved his hand, as for silence,
Stamp'd loud on the step of his throne,
And bade the two rivals together
Dismount, and their errors disown.

"Ah! this page is a rival for any,
And fit to break lance with his king;
Let the gallants first meet in the tournay,
And afterwards ride for the ring."
Dick stood at the feet of the monarch,
And bowed till his plume swept the ground;
Then, clapping on helmet and feather,
Rode into the lists with a bound.

Sir Walter was silently waiting,
He shone like a statue of gold;
Blue threads of big pearls, like a netting,
Fell over his housings' red fold.
On his helmet a weather-cock glittered,
A device of his errantry showing,
To prove he was ready to ride
Any way that the wind might be blowing.

Dick lifted his eyes up and smil'd,
Oh! it brought the blood hot to my cheek;
I could see from his lips he was praying
That God would look down on the weak.
He seemed to be grown to his saddle,
I felt my brain tremble and reel,
He moved like a fire-ruling spirit,
Blazing from helmet to heel.

The King gave the sign, and the trumpet
Seemed to madden the horses, and drive
Them fast as the leaves in a tempest.
With a shock the tough iron would rive,
Both lances flew up, and the shivers
Leapt over the banners and flags,
As the champions, reining their chargers,
Sat holding the quivering jags.

Fresh lances! "God's blessing on Dicky!"—
A blast, and in flashes they go!
"Well broken again on his scutcheon!"
Again the wood snaps with the blow.
Alas, for Sir Walter De Tracey!
His spear has flown out of his hand,
Whilst over his bright-gilded crupper
He stretches his length on the sand.

One start! he is up in a moment;
His sword waves a torch in his grasp,
Dick leaps from his foam-covered charger,
And springs with a clash to his clasp.
Sir Walter is shorn of his splendour,
His weather-cock beaten to dust,
His armour has lost all its glitter,
And is dinted with hammer and thrust.

He reels, and Dick presses him sorely,
And smites him as smiths do a forge;
He reels like an axe-stricken cedar—
He falls!—yes!—by God and St. George.
Then, oh, for the clamour and cheering
That rang round the circling ring,
As Dick, his blue feather gay blowing,
Knelt down at the foot of the King!

Then the King took the brightest of diamonds
That shone on his fingers that day,
He gave it to bonny Blue Feather,
And made him the Baron of Bray.
Then the varlets bore off their Sir Walter,
The jewels beat out of his chains,
His armour all batter'd and dusty,
With less of proud blood in his veins.

Then they caught his mad froth-cover'd charger,
That had torn off its housings of pearl,
They gathered up ribbons and feathers,
And, downcast, his banner they furl.
I was still looking down on the bearers,
When Dick o' the Diamond sprang in,
And without a good morrow or greeting,
He kissed me from brow unto chin.

THE TOWN-GATE.

In the dusky summer evenings,
When the light was growing dim;
The watch from the darkening chamber
Oft heard the distant hymn,
As groups, through the twilight breaking,
Moved over the dry scorched down,
Waving the palm-branch and the staff,
At the sight of the stately town.

Soon, slowly through the dusky gate,
To the light that lay beyond,
Trod all the dusty pilgrims,
Happy as men from bond;
Pointing out tower and steeple
To the boys with the palm-leaf crown,
Chanting the songs of Zion,
To welcome the stately town.

The old men, tired and travel-worn,
  Were telling tales of home;
Prating of many dangers past,
  Of desert or sea-foam.
They sang one hymn together,
  Though a few looked sadly down,
The rest with glad flushed faces
  Entered the stately town.

In the dark midnights of winter,
  Oft came, with bloody plume,
With dinted helm and bleeding horse,
  The trooper and the groom;
Red-hot from rout and rally,
  "Once they were stricken down,"—
Then spurred, with wild and staring eyes,
  Into the stately town.

In the merry April mornings,
  The laughing players come;
One blows a pipe and capers,
  Another beats a drum:
One bawls out strings of ballads,
  And a boy in a woman's gown,
Screams scraps of "dying Juliet,"
  As they enter the stately town.

With a blaze of cloak and feather,
Of fluttering cloth of gold,
Through the dull white fogs of autumn,
With crimson wreath and fold,
Rode knights unto the tournay,
Trampling over the down,
Grand as a cloud of summer,
Into the stately town.

Driven before the pikemen,
Half-naked, pale, aghast,
Flying like leaves of autumn
Before the chasing blast,
Now hurry bleeding burghers,
Their gashed heads bending down,
Urged on with shouts and curses,
Fast from the stately town.

In the dreadful year of famine,
When black Death moved about,
Three livid, maddened creatures,
With groans and a shrieking shout,
Ran naked through the gateway,
Their shorn heads bandaged down,
From the red-crossed door left open,
To scare the stately town.

When bells shook every steeple,
And flags deck'd every roof;
'Bess' on a milk-white palfrey,
Trapped with a purple woof,
Smiled, as the pursy alderman,
With the massy keys knelt down;
Then through a flame of cannon
Swept into the stately town.

In a balmy noon of summer,
With clash and shock of drums,
'Midst roar of guns and waving flags,
Hoarse shouts and rabble hums,
The iron Cromwell entered,
His stern eyes looking down,
Not heeding all the pomp and wealth
That filled the stately town.

THE KING OF CHAMPAGNE.

I'm all day watching the glow
Of the gold and the crimson wine;
All day watching the amethysts grow
In bunches upon the vine;
All night watching the blood spring out
From the life of the trampled fruit;
All night watching the seething vats
When the cross stars trail and shoot.

I hold the long glass up to the sun,
Seeing the ruby burn,
Marking the dull, dark hue of the wine
To a glistening topaz turn,
When the hidden fire that brings me joy
Steals swift into my brain,
This wine hath the scent of the April shower.
And the glow of the summer rain.

I hear the hum of the troubled cask,
And the buzz and rush of the wine,
When the red tide pours in the weltering tun,
And its black beads rise and shine.
I love the tuneful drip, drip, drip,
Of the golden leak of the cask,
As one by one the drops in tune,
Fall in their measured task.

I hear the gurgle and rush
From the long-necked tapering flask,
The flow of jewels that twinkling shine,
Rippling out of the cask.
I sit in the mellow afternoon,
Dozing over my wine,
And hear the voice of the vineyard thrush
Oozing from out the vine;

I hear the roosting chirp of the finch,
In the thick of the dark elm tree;
And the drawling tramp, in the white dust road,
Of the reapers two and three;
And I seem to myself alone with the dead,
In a twilight purgatory,
Till I sit and croon the merry old tune
That I made for Margery.

I'm all day watching the rush
Of the column of beads in the glass;
I guard the flow of the silver tap,—
Singing a leisurely mass;
Stirring the wine with a picotee,
Or clove with its velvety red,
And talking of how many years ago
The man who grew them was dead.

I watch the fountain rush
Of the swift, bright bubbles that rise,
Comparing their scent to ladies' breath,
And their glitter to ladies' eyes.
I watch the cream of the snowy foam
Churned from the yellow wines,
And down through the liquor a good long foot,
The gold of the tankards shines.

The scented fire of the Moselle grape,
And the flowery juice of the Hock,
The Virgin's milk—the holiest wine
Of the Rhine-land abbot's stock;
And the tears of Christ, from the lava dust,
Run fluid gold in the cup;
They're things to be drunk with a hymn or a prayer,
And eye-balls turning up.

And here I sit, with my cup and my jug,
And my silver tankards three;
This is Annie, and that is Fanny,
And this is Joan, by my knee.
They are my wives and my children dear,
My father and mother and all;
And they are my priests, for I empty each,
In the name of the good St. Paul.

SCENES AT A FOUNTAIN.

HERE the proud peacock came to spread his fan,
Its emerald lustres and its purple eyes,
The water, then all molten sapphire, caught
The glory of those dyes.

Here the white doves came down to peck and prune,
Like melting snow their mingling shadows fell;
Driven in flapping circles round the elms,
Scared by the clamorous bell.

And here the gold-finch, like a magic bird,
Would perch and sing, unheeded and alone;
Flirting the bright drops from its hazel wings,
Upon the marble stone.

And here the panting stag-hound, worn and weak,
Hurried, to dip its red and frothy tongue;
Sullen, not caring for the rippling fount,
Or for the bird that sung.

Mopping and mowing, came the jester quaint,
All red and yellow—ran to splash and dip;
A mad song lurking in his wandering eye—
A mad jest on his lip.

Here came the Queen of Hearts, sweet mistress Anne,
"By Hercules! a most excelling fair!"
So lisped Sir Ague; she spake not—but stooped
To re-arrange her hair.

The fat cook, reeking from his fiery den,
Waddled to rinse his salver and his dish;
Marking, with staring eye of foolish awe,
The gold and silver fish.

The falconer, busy with his bells and straps,
Used here to bathe the bruised wing of his hawk;
Smiling to see the bright eye of the bird—
Marking him strut and stalk.

Here old Sir Richard spurred his hot-plashed steed,
Faint with the scurry of a long day's chase;
A cold frown on his sallow, leaden eye,
So full of pride of race.

And here the friar would sit and dip his beads,
Thinking of Jonah and the water world;
Or moralising, on the fallen leaf, when now
Autumn's gold banner furled.

And here the young lord, rosy through his curls,
Came stealthily to swim his gilded boat;
Clapping his hands to see the silver jet,
And rainbow-bubbles float.

Here, too, that dreadful night when ruin fell
Upon the house, those red hands washed the knife;
As from the distant gable came a shriek
From the departing life.

THE JESTER'S SERMON.

THE Jester shook his hood and bells, and leaped upon a chair,
The pages laughed, the women screamed, and tossed their scented hair;
The falcon whistled, stag-hounds bayed, the lap-dog barked without,
The scullion dropped the pitcher brown, the cook railed at the lout;
The steward, counting out his gold, let pouch and money fall,
And why? because the Jester rose to say grace in the hall!

The page played with the heron's plume, the steward with his chain,
The butler drummed upon the board, and laughed with might and main;

THE JESTER'S SERMON.

The grooms beat on their metal cans, and roared
till they turned red.
But still the Jester shut his eyes, and rolled his
witty head;
And when they grew a little still, read half a yard
of text,
And waving hand, struck on the desk, then frowned
like one perplexed.

"Dear sinners all," the fool began. "man's life is
but a jest,
A dream, a shadow, bubble, air, a vapour at the
best.
In a thousand pounds of law I find not a single
ounce of love:
A blind man killed the parson's cow in shooting at
the dove;
The fool that eats till he is sick must fast till he is
well;
The wooer who can flatter most will bear away the
bell.

Let no man haloo he is safe till he is through the
wood;
He who will not when he may, must tarry when he
should.

He who laughs at crooked men should need walk very straight;
O he who once has won a name may lie a-bed till eight.
Make haste to purchase house and land, be very slow to wed;
True coral needs no painter's brush, nor need be daubed with red.

The friar, preaching, cursed the thief (the pudding in his sleeve).
To fish for sprats with golden hooks is foolish, by your leave—
To travel well—an ass's ears, ape's face, hog's mouth, and ostrich legs.
He does not care a pin for thieves who limps about and begs.
Be always first man at a feast and last man at a fray;
The short way round, in spite of all, is still the longest way.

When the hungry curate licks the knife there's not much for the clerk;
When the pilot, turning pale and sick, looks up—the storm grows dark."

Then loud they laughed, the fat cook's tears ran
down into the pan;
The steward shook, that he was forced to drop the
brimming can;
And then again the women screamed, and every
stag-hound bayed—
And why? because the motley fool so wise a
sermon made!

THE RIDING TO THE TOURNAMENT.

Over meadows purple flowered,
Through the dark lanes oak-embowered.
Over commons dry and brown,
Through the silent red-roofed town,
Past the reapers and the sheaves,
Over white roads strewn with leaves,
By the gipsy's ragged tent,
Rode we to the Tournament.

Over clover wet with dew,
Whence the sky-lark, startled, flew,
Through brown fallows, where the hare
Leapt up from its subtle lair,
Past the mill-stream and the reeds
Where the stately heron feeds,
By the warren's sunny wall,
Where the dry leaves shake and fall,

By the hall's ancestral trees,
Bent and writhing in the breeze,
Rode we all with one intent,
Gaily to the Tournament.

Golden sparkles, flashing gem,
Lit the robes of each of them,
Cloak of velvet, robe of silk,
Mantle snowy-white as milk,
Rings upon our bridle hand,
Jewels on our belt and band,
Bells upon our golden reins,
Tinkling spurs and shining chains—
In such merry mob we went
Riding to the Tournament.

Laughing voices, scraps of song,
Lusty music loud and strong,
Rustling of the banners blowing,
Whispers as of rivers flowing,
Whistle of the hawks we bore
As they rise and as they soar,
Now and then a clash of drums
As the rabble louder hums,
Now and then a burst of horns
Sounding over brooks and bourns,

As in merry guise we went
Riding to the Tournament.

There were abbots fat and sleek,
Nuns in couples, pale and meek.
Jugglers tossing cups and knives,
Yeomen with their buxom wives,
Pages playing with the curls
Of the rosy village girls,
Grizzly knights with faces scarred,
Staring through their visors barred,
Huntsmen cheering with a shout
At the wild stag breaking out,
Harper, stately as a king,
Touching now and then a string,
As our revel laughing went
To the solemn Tournament.

Charger with the massy chest,
Foam-spots flecking mane and breast,
Pacing stately, pawing ground,
Fretting for the trumpet's sound,
White and sorrel, roan and bay,
Dappled, spotted, black, and grey,
Palfreys snowy as the dawn,
Ponies sallow as the fawn,

All together neighing went
Trampling to the Tournament.

Long hair scattered in the wind,
Curls that flew a yard behind,
Flags that struggled like a bird
Chained and restive—not a word
But half buried in a laugh;
And the lance's gilded staff
Shaking when the bearer shook
At the jester's merry look,
As he grins upon his mule,
Like an urchin leaving school,
Shaking bauble, tossing bells,
At the merry jest he tells,—
So in happy mood we went,
Laughing to the Tournament.

What a bustle at the inn,
What a stir, without—within;
Filling flagons, brimming bowls
For a hundred thirsty souls;
Froth in snow-flakes flowing down,
From the pitcher big and brown,
While the tankards brim and bubble
With the balm for human trouble;

How the maiden coyly sips
How the yeoman wipes his lips,
How the old knight drains the cup
Slowly and with calmness up,
And the abbot, with a prayer,
Fills the silver goblet rare,
Praying to the saints for strength
As he holds it at arm's length;
How the jester spins the bowl
On his thumb, then quaffs the whole;
How the pompous steward bends
And bows to half-a-dozen friends,
As in thirsty mood we went
Dusty to the Tournament.

Then again the country over
Through the stubble and the clover,
By the crystal-dropping springs,
Where the road-dust clogs and clings
To the pearl-leaf of the rose,
Where the tawdry nightshade blows,
And the bramble twines its chains
Through the sunny village lanes,
Where the thistle sheds its seed,
And the goldfinch loves to feed,
By the milestone green with moss,
By the broken wayside cross,

In a merry band we went
Shouting to the Tournament.

Pilgrims with their hood and cowl,
Pursy burghers cheek by jowl,
Archers with the peacock's wing
Fitting to the waxen string,
Pedlars with their pack and bags,
Beggars with their coloured rags,
Silent monks, whose stony eyes,
Rests in trance upon the skies,
Children sleeping at the breast,
Merchants from the distant West,
All in gay confusion went
To the royal Tournament.

Players with the painted face
And a drunken man's grimace,
Grooms who praise their raw-boned steeds,
Old wives telling maple beads,—
Blackbirds from the hedges broke,
Black crows from the beeches croak,
Glossy swallows in dismay
From the mill-stream fled away,
The angry swan, with ruffled breast,
Frowned upon her osier nest,

The wren hopped restless on the brake,
The otter made the sedges shake,
The butterfly before our rout
Flew like a blossom blown about,
The coloured leaves, a globe of life,
Spun round and scattered as in strife,
Sweeping down the narrow lane
Like the slant shower of the rain,
The lark in terror, from the sod,
Flew up and straight appealed to God,
As a noisy band we went
Trotting to the Tournament.

But when we saw the holy town,
With its river and its down,
Then the drums began to beat
And the flutes piped mellow sweet;
Then the deep and full bassoon
Murmured like a wood in June,
And the fifes, so sharp and bleak,
All at once began to speak.
Hear the trumpets clear and loud,
Full-tongued, eloquent, and proud,
And the dulcimer that ranges
Through such wild and plaintive changes;

Merry sound the jester's shawm,
To our gladness giving form;
And the shepherd's chalumeau,
Rich and soft, and sad and low;
Hark! the bagpipes squeak and groan—
Every herdsman has his own;
So in measured step we went
Pacing to the Tournament.

All at once the chimes break out,
Then we hear the townsmen shout,
And the morris-dancers' bells
Tinkling in the grassy dells;
The bell thunder from the tower
Adds its sound of doom and power.
As the cannon's loud salute
For a moment made us mute,
Then again the laugh and joke
On the startled silence broke;—
Thus in merry mood we went
Laughing to the Tournament.

AN OCTOBER FRUIT PIECE.

Look at the gold fruit hung
Where the robin pruned, carolled, and sung ;
  Red through the green
  Shows the nectarine.
Long has the damson swung.
To its heart the hornet has clung,—
The knell of the year is rung.

No ! the plum has a golden wound,
The robin has carolled and pruned ;
  The wasp it preys,
  All the autumn days,
Where the robin has piped and tuned ;
Not heeding the dead fruit's wound—
For hours it has piped and tuned.

Though the clouds may fold and furl,
The rooks still gather and swirl,
  A thick black swarm
  Now the noons are warm,
Careless of ploughman or earl ;
Moving in circle and whirl,
While the fire-clouds drift and furl.

THE WEAVER AND HIS SHADOW.

Beside a dying woman,
A pale man plied the loom,
The buzz of the wheel and treddle
Filled all the squalid room.
It drowned the groans of the children,—
That loom, with its robe of state;—
Its threads of pink and silver
Shine bright as a coffin-plate,
Whirr—deedle—deedle—deedle,
Gay as a coffin-plate.

Deep, in the thickening twilight,
Another weaver sits;
A grizzly thing of nothing but bones,
Weaving and singing by fits.
His woof is black as a dead man's pall,
And spotted with poor man's tears:
He sings a dirge with the sob of a child,
A tale of passion and fears;
Whirr—deedle—deedle—deedle,
A tale of passion and fears.

His thin hands move with a madman's speed.
Though weak for lack of bread;
He chokes to hear the dying groan
Of his wife, who's all but dead.
But the costly robe of the duchess,
The robe of pomp and state,
Must be done this very evening,
Not a moment after eight.
Whirr—deedle—deedle—deedle.
Not a moment after eight.

A thousand swift feet dancing,
Jewels, and silk, and flowers,
Bright smiles of love and greeting,
None there to count the hours:
And, in the midst, the duchess
Moves like a sceptred queen,
With never a thought of coffin or shroud.
Or the strips of the turf so green,
Whirr—deedle—deedle—deedle,
Or the strips of the turf so green.

AUTUMN JINGLES.

See the morning dew is dripping,
And the gold skin of the pippin
Shines like metal through the dripping
  Of the autumn's crystal dew.
Now the robin's breast grows brighter,
As the apple bough grows lighter,—
Autumn red leaf glowed the brighter,
  When the swallow eastward flew.

Every hedge is gemmed with berries,
Rosy red as summer cherries;
Nests of rubies, piles of berries;
  What a treasure to the boy!
Now the bramble's quite a study,
With its fruit, half black, half ruddy—
Really, really, quite a study
  To the cowherd, food and joy.

Now the yellow pear is swaying
On the fading tree that's weighing
Down with all that ceaseless swaying
Of the fruit so rich and sweet.
Every faded vine-leaf dapples,
With a blood-stain, like the apple's,
Green, yet blushing where it dapples;
Falling, bursting at our feet.

Every gust the walnuts rattle,
All the boughs go tittle-tattle,
When the dry shells fall and rattle,
And the leaf comes whirling down.
Golden-globed, the rich plums cover
All the wall; and many a lover
Flocks around that luscious cover,
When the leaves turn crimson brown.

How the brown nuts drop in plenty;
Every shake will bring down twenty;
Husks are splitting; there are plenty
For the squirrel and the mouse.
Now the spider, swift and busy,
Netting dead boughs—tell me, is he
Not by far the one most busy,
Spinneth in the garden-house?

A BALLAD FROM FROISSART.

[On one occasion, during the wars of the Black Prince, Sir John Chandos, the Seneschal of Poitou, separated himself from the young Earl of Pembroke, who, in a moment of pride, had refused to accompany him in a foray into Anjou. The earl soon after, while halting at Charente, was surprised by a band of Frenchmen, who broke into the town, crying, "Our Lady of Sancerre for the Marshal of France!" and blockaded him in a preceptory of the Templars. The conclusion of the story, and the rescue of the earl, is given in our ballad.]

THE nights are cold at Candlemas, and the snow
is on the roof,
It lies on the broad roads three foot deep, and
muffles every hoof;
The spider's glued unto his web, the bird to
roosting bough,
The shepherd, frozen by the fold, prays for the
morning now;

The cressets on the whitened road cast shadows black and strange,
Wavering o'er buried hedge and fence, past cabin and past grange;
'Tis Pembroke and stout Chandos, with twice three hundred lances,
And the red light that before them goes upon their spear-heads dances.

Before those knights so amorous, so brave, and debonair,
The archers marched, their carol rings clear through the thin frozen air;
But the earl rides silent and alone, wrathful and discontent;
More like their prisoner than their chief, to Puirenon he went.

Behind crowd merchants of Narbonne, with many muleteers,
Their beasts bear cloth from Brussels, and furs from proud Bergeres;
And golden silks from Alesandre and Damas cross the sea,
Bright pearls from Ormuz, eastern gems, and bales of spiceric.

Leap'd up the beacons as they came, from roof
and turret tall.
And woke the burghers, as the light shone ruddy
in the hall;
The torches flashed down winding streets, and lit
the market-place,
And there was joy in every eye, and welcome on
each face.

The knights of Brabant and Navarre, and they of
Portingale,
Put down the cup unemptied, and ceased the half-
told tale;
For when the horns were three times wound the
drawbridge rattled down,
And all the mailed horsemen rode trampling through
the town.

The sleeping city starts to life at that deep hollow
sound,
Like will-o'-the-wisps the clustering lights ran
gathering around;
And every voice united then in the universal glee,
"All hail to Chandos and the flower of England's
chivalry!"

Stern Pembroke, frowning in the van, brook'd ill
that cordial shout,
He bit his lip in anger hot at Chandos and the
rout;
By all the saints of France he vow'd he'd not
disgrace his peers,
But, with his sixty lancers, would gallop to
Poictiers.

"Give place, ye rabble, mean and base!" and,
without bow or sign,
He turn'd again his charger's head—"Now follow,
men of mine!"
And the fire-sparks from their clattering heels lit
all the path they went,
As they spurr'd down the rocky path that leadeth
to Charente.

"Now foul befall the black earl's pride," quoth
Chandos, with a smile;
"There'll come a day he'll need our help; let's
rest us now the while.
And I swear, by our lady of Sancerre, he shall
bend twice his knee,
Ere I put a lance in rest for him, whate'er his
jeopardy."

'Tis merry in the castle hall, where noble Chandos stands,
And holds a cup of Cyprus wine in his uplifted hands;
"God save ye, gallant gentlemen, ye noble hearts and true,
I pray you drink to every dame that dwells in fair Anjou."

Gay arras, Babylonian wove, shone bright with threads of gold;
The forked banners o'er their heads shook each its rustling fold;
And gleeful minstrels hushed their harps, and ceased their song and tale,
As every knight waved high his hand, with "Noble Chandos, hail!"

Then the hippocras and spices were handed to each guest,
Round went the flagon ceaselessly, for with it went the jest;
The feathers waved, steel armour shone, the tabards glitter'd fair,
And Pleasure laugh'd as he barred out the frozen beggar, Care.

The feast went on, the lights grew pale, 'twas very
near the dawn,
But still the harp was vibrating, and still rang loud
the horn;
The very warder at the gate was merry as his
lord,—
When there broke in a weary squire, holding a
broken sword.

"Fair sir," he says, with feeble voice, "I've
gallop'd from Charente,
And my best blood the rocky path—I'm worn and
travel spent.
The earl hath need of instant help, for he is sore
bested:"
He spoke, and at the dais reeled—they raised him,—
he was dead!

But Chandos gazed upon the ground, and then
looked slowly up,
Struck the oak board till the sparkling wine leap'd
from the golden cup,
Then bit his lips till the blood sprang out, and
cried, with a look of pain,
"The fool that sows the whirlwind must reap the
hurricane."

He startled as the door flew wide, and a second page rush'd in.
"What news, boy, from the earl—speak—speak! Do they the castle win?
Art dumb—be quick—dost bear to us a letter or a sign?"
The fainting valet could not speak, but beckoned for the wine.

He knelt, and from his doublet torn, drew out a golden ring:
"This, this, with danger and with toil, from the brave earl I bring.
In Mary's name, brave gentlemen, as you do hope for grace,
As you do hope to look upon—once more, your lady's face"——

But Chandos turned him away, and leant upon his hand,
He mutter'd low unto himself, and stirred the smouldering brand,
Then struck the log that flash'd up sparks with his war-axe a blow,
And crush'd it with his mailed heel, as one would do a foe.

Quoth he, "If all Tourraine is out, 'twere but in
vain to ride;
And if he *were* struck down and ta'en, it would but
cool his pride."
But gloom broke sudden from his brow: all knew
the chief's intent,
As he rose up, and shouted out, "*We'll gallop
to Charente!*"

He thrust the table from its place, and called for
his steed.
"We must not leave this gallant soul to perish in
his need."
He drew his visor slowly close, as they rose up
to cheer,
And knelt him down to breathe a prayer,—some
say to hide a tear.

Then rang the hall with shout and cry, and every
eye grew bright,
The helms were laced, the spurs put on, and
saddle-girths pulled tight;
The seats were left in fiery haste, and sword-belts
girded fast,
The maces tied to saddle-bows, and cups to pages
cast.

Some caps and mantles cast aside, some pennons do unfurl,
Then shields braced on, and tighten'd bands, to hurry to the earl.
"Advance the banners, in God's name!" the standard-bearer cries.
"Set on," shouts Chandos, spurring fast, "lest the stout Pembroke dies!"

'Twas brave to see the banners wave the glittering spears among;
'Twas brave to see the streamers all, bright glistening 'gainst the sun;
But braver far it was to see stout Chandos, and his spears,
Break through the ford by Auberoche with cries and lusty cheers.

The archers all together shot, the lances were in rest,
Plumed heads were to the saddle bent, stout shields before each breast,
With the sound of drum and bugle horn, with shout and battle din,
They swept into the leaguer'd town, and through the press broke in.

THE DANCES OF THE LEAVES.

Now the sky is ever filling, ever filling,
On such dark and rainy eves,
With unwilling, with unwilling
Eddies of the countless leaves.
They are sailing, they are sailing
Round the wet and dripping trees,
Mid the wailing, mid the wailing
Groanings of the dying breeze.
Twisting, twirling, ever swirling
Round the black and matted boughs,
Where the whirling, restless whirling
Rooks do harbour and do house.
Witches' circles, witches' circles
Higher than the leafless tree,
Countless circles, lessening circles,
With a wild, unearthly glee.
Like the madmen, like the madmen,
In a dance around the dead,

Mopping, mowing, mopping, mowing,
Round the pale form on the bed.
And the branches creep and shiver,
As they flutter, as they flutter,
From the copsewood to the river,
While the bare woods sigh and mutter.
In a cluster, in a cluster,
From the hollows in the lane;
How they muster, how they muster.
Like the spirits through the rain.
All their pinions, all their pinions,
Black and crimson, brown and gold.
Their dominions, their dominions,
Conquered by the winter cold.
Their procession, their procession
Crowds along the churchyard path:
Their progression, their progression.
Growing swifter as in wrath.
Hurry, hurry, hurry, hurry,
Over heath and yellow broom;
How they scurry, how they scurry.
Like the devils to the doom.
Flying Arabs, flying Arabs,
When the wind comes howling after;
Scattered Caribs, scattered Caribs.
Leaping over roof and rafter.

Over paling, over paling,
Through the park and o'er the lawn;
And their railing, and their railing,
Mocks the loud wind's thunder scorn.
Groping blinded, groping blinded,
Through the pine tree's prison bars.
Cruel minded, cruel minded,
By the pale light of the stars.
Up the garden, up the garden,
Where the flowers hang black in flakes,
(Pray for pardon, pray for pardon!)
Like the rags from gibbet stakes.
See the foot-prints, see the foot-prints,
Of death bearers from the doors,
And the white splints, and the white splints.
Of the oak tree on the moors.
Showering, showering, ever showering,
On the bald head of the digger;
Poring, poring, old and poring,
In the grave that's growing bigger.
At the lattice, at the lattice,
Drive the leaves like noisy rain:
In rage that is, in rage that is,
Hating joy and all her train.
Fire-lights flutter, fire-lights flutter,
Round the deep embrasured room.

Shadows mutter, shadows mutter,
To the creatures of the gloom.
Hear the cricket, hear the cricket,
Like the spirit of the hearth;
While the wicket, while the wicket,
Shakes in chorus to its mirth.
Up the chancel, up the chancel,
Through the open eastern oriel;
Tombs they cancel, tombs they cancel,
With a sound of grief corporeal.
Then they scatter, then they scatter,
Up the round stairs of the tower,
Where they batter, where they batter,
All man wrought in his brief hour.
And they muffle, and they muffle,
All the deep and clamorous bells.
Then they shuffle, how they shuffle,
Through the room where no one dwells.
Ever wending, ever wending,
Spite of winter's blustering rage,
An unending, an unending,
Sad and weary pilgrimage.
Never resting, never resting,
Till the spring blows soft again,
And the western, and the western
Sky grows azure after rain.

Till the cuckoo, till the cuckoo,
Scares the sleeping shepherd boy.
"Willy, look you—Willy, look you,
Flowers break forth for very joy."
Such the dances, such the dances,
Of the leaves throughout the year;
Seen in trances, seen in trances.
Just as I have written here.

THE MILL STREAM.

Circle, circle, swallows circle
Round the willow mead,
And below them, far below them,
Dappled oxen feed;
Where, amid the oat-grass waving,
Bristles up the reed.

Like a troop of frenzied Tartars,
Chasing round the mead,
Every trout deep in the river
Startling by their speed,
Past the golden and the azure
Of the flowering weed.

Turning, wheeling quick in circles,
Swift as desert horse,
How unlike that stately river,
With its changeless course;
Never turning, sad at straying,
From its limpid source.

Circling, circling, waving, diving
Round the wavy sallows,
Where the mossy wheel is dipping,
Frothing all the shallows;
And bright, purple, free, and lavish,
Bloom the broad-leaved mallows.

Where the river choked with blossom
Gurgles through the reeds,
Past the moist ooze, dark and sluggish,
Where the otter feeds,
By the blue Forget-me-not,
In the osier meads.

Where the king-fisher sits resting,
By the willowy stream,
And his wings with light of sunset
For a moment gleam;
Chased by every glossy swallow,
As day scares a dream.

When the cows flock to the milker,
Shadow'd in the stream,
And the swallows have ceased circling,
Saving, in their dream;
And the purple flowers no longer
In the shallows gleam.

See the mossed roots of the willows
Creep to drink the stream,
Circling, winding, creeping, writhing.
Like a fever dream ;
And along the distant high-road,
Jogs the jingling team.

Still from corn slopes, brown and golden,
Comes a distant laugh,
Where among the half-cut barley,
Reapers shout and quaff:
Half the earth is now in sunshine,
And in shadow half.

Liquid azure flows the river,
Through the sunny mead,
Where dark shadows chase the gleaners,
With the spirits speed ;
On the paths, that by the river,
To the village lead.

Mark the broad leaves of the lily,
'Neath the current gleam,
Part disclosed, and partly hidden
(Faces in a dream) ;
Every breeze blows dark the ripple
On the twinkling stream.

Where the tide seems still to linger,
By the flags in rank,
And the blue flower of remembrance,
Blooms upon the bank;
Every little nodding blossom,
With eve's dew is dank.

There the dark weeds float and waver,
With the moving stream,
Beckoning like spectral fingers,
Warning us in dream;
And beneath them silver flashing
Lurking fishes gleam.

There the river toileth slowly,
Where the willow's drooping;
Through the marshy, reedy meadow
All the steers are trooping;
In the shadow of the hawthorn
The herd-boy is whooping.

Through the distant meadows ranging,
Rambles on the stream,
Creeping in a line of silver,
(Love-thought through a dream;)
You may track it 'mid the fallows,
By that silver gleam.

When the sky is red with sunset,
Crimson every cloud,
And the river fiery flowing,
With a lustre proud;
There, as moths around a taper,
Gay the swallows crowd.

When the gnats the river dimple,
As with spots of rain,
Weaving round their twining circles,
Humming each his strain:
There, like hawks around the sparrows,
Swallows flock amain.

THE MONKS OF ELY.

[It is recorded in an old chronicle, that as a certain Saxon king was returning from a victory, and rowing past the towers of Ely, he bade his oarsmen rest for a moment, that he might hear the holy chants of the monks.]

PAST the stately towers of Ely
Row King Canute and his Thanes,
Where the saints and where the martyrs
Moulder in the sun and rains;
Twice a hundred burning summers
Have shone full upon those panes.
"Row ye slowly past the abbey,
Softer, softer, O ye Thanes."

Hark! the holy brothers' hymn,
From the cloister dark and dim—
Like the death-prayer of a saint,
Comes the murmur low and faint,

Waking not the swallow's young,
In the belfry turret hung;
Where like flinty mountain peak,
Yonder towers blue heaven seek,
And as swift as jet of fire,
Leaps towards the clouds the spire.

"All the dyes of Paradise
Bloom unfading in each pane;
Perfumes of eternal April
On the marble pavements rain,
Like a temple from the ocean,
From those seas of golden grain,
Rise the turrets; steer then softly
Past the twilight porch again."

Stately as the mountain's height,
Rise the towers in sun and light,
Though they laugh to scorn the thunder,
That doth howl and mutter under,
Yet they shelter safe and warm,
From the wind and from the storm,
Where the massy bells are swung,
The wild dove and her white young,
In the battlement so high,
When the hurricane is nigh.

"All day long from yonder turret,
Murmur birds their ceaseless psalm;
All night long the convent garden,
Fragrant with the breath of balm,
Echoes with the bird rejoicing,
Like a martyr with his palm.
Row then softly, may the angels
Shield us all from sin and harm."

Like a silver frothing fountain,
The carved pinnacles are mounting,
All is dark and dusk within,
O'ershaded, as man's life, with sin,
Chequered with the dreadful gloom
Of the very day of doom,
Barr'd with all the light and shade
That on life itself is laid,
Light comes only through the pane,
Blazon'd with Christ's crimson stain.

"Past the solemn towers of Ely,
Slowly floats the royal galley;
Past the corn slopes and the meadows,
Past the holt, and moor, and valley,
Where the weary reapers resting,
With their laughing children dally;

Row then softer, O my vassals,
Past the orchard, through the valley."

Round those niches long ago,
Did the stone-flowers bud and blow,
Now in frost and snow and rain,
Mouldering to earth again,
So man's hopes do all decay,
As the rose melts into clay.
Yet God's praises do not cease,
Nor the flowers of earth decrease;
Earth is just as full of sun,
As ere death had yet begun.

"Though we've passed the towers of Ely,
Still I hear the chant within,
Faint as whisper in the bosom,
Warning one of shame and sin,
Like the lark's voice o'er a city,
Spite of all the war and din.
Softly row our gilded galley,
Till the monks have hush'd within."

THE JOCKEY'S SONG.

"His eye, which scornfully glisteneth like fire,
Shows his hot courage and his high desire."

SHAKSPERE'S *Venus and Adonis.*

THERE'S the saddling-bell ringing—a death peal for some;
Bring old Galloper out, and come, jockey lad, come—
There's devil about him, there's fire in his eye;
Where there's blood in the "cretur" the courage runs high.

Draw his clothes gently off; 'gad, see the thing shine—
No rose leaf is softer, no satin so fine;
See the veins, how they branch on the dark, glossy skin—
Good signs of the pluck and the mettle within.

How the trainer and backer look on him the
while,
As you would on a child, with a pat and a smile;
For the horse knows to-day he must prove him-
self best,
As well as I know the sun sets in the west.

Bring him on through the crowd, while the
wrappers I doff;
Though sleek as a judge when his clothing's thrown
off,
Ere an hour has gone past, in a ditch I may lie,
And this broken-backed jade by his rider may die.

They are clearing the course, give a leg, with a
bound,
Pull that girth a bit tighter, I mustn't to ground;
We had need of firm seat when we fly through
the air:
'Gad the people are thronging around like a fair.

"More power to yer elbow."—"Good luck t'ye
Jack;
Success to yer name, and I wish you well back."
The bell has done ringing, for a breathing
I start;
There's time for a warning before the boys part."

"Hurrah for Stripe Jacket!"—"My whip there, my spur;
'Tis as sharp as the spike of that wild prickled bur."
They're coming—good fellows as ever strode horse;
Ah! there's mother and Bobby, and Susan, of course.

"Hallo, Jack, boy!"—"Hey, Nat, there."—Ah! Scott, man, there's fun
In hand for some three of us ere we have done.
We start altogether, but I'll bet thee a crown
Ere that swinger is past there'll be half of us down.

"I shall win in a canter,—I'll bet you a five
I'll be neck with the bay," ay, but tush, man alive.
A drop of the flask ere we start, is the thing
To keep up the glow on the top of the skin.

The starter, lads, comes with his flag—have a care;
How deep is his voice, with his, "All ready, there?"
Light hand on the bridle, bold eye, and foot steady,
Loud the chorus responsive, "We're ready—ay. ready."

There's a rasping good fence, and a slapping wide brook,
And a bullfinch, a leap that, I swear by the book,
Will take all the blood.—There's a start—clear the way!
They're—no!—God be with them!—they're *off*—they're away.

Bound, swift as the roe-deer, my brown one, my pride;
Put your feet down together, make sure of your stride.
I'll stick to your back as the rattler you clear;—
Hurrah! here it comes, and not one jockey near.

Well done! without clipping, no wild deer could fly
So sure, nor so swift, nor so true, nor so high.
No wild deer, though winged by the cry of the hound,
Such a rasper as that could have cleared at a bound.

There are hoofs sounding hollow not far from my back;
Blue cap and the chestnut are fast on our track.

He is up—there's another, and one far behind,—
To catch us, he need borrow speed from the wind.

There's the burst that leads on to the rail and the brook:
Drive fast, without thought, without word, without look.
One bound and we're over, I hear the hurrah
Grow faint, with a sound that comes borne from afar.

One's down, and the jock a good spinner is thrown;
'Tis Nat, and the fellow is not left alone;
The third scrambles through on the bright chestnut horse;
But the fourth has turned tail, and has swerved from the course.

He has passed me—confusion!—upon him I gain,
Drive the spur, ply the whip fast, and slacken the rein.
Old Galloper's come of good kith and good kin,
But the foam from his mouth falls like snow on his skin.

We charge three at the fence, Yellow Jacket is hurled,—
Like a stone from a sling from his saddle he's whirled.
With a thigh-bone all splintered, he crawls from the track;
We've no time to speak comfort, no time to look back.

We charge three at the fence, the black mare's gone lame,
With a thundering crash on the hurdle she came;
Poor cripple! scarce fit for the bone-knacker's knife,
She limps from the race-course—he's ruined for life.

They tail off, and we two are sharp at it again,
He's straining each sinew, and muscle, and vein.
But I'll wait on him now, 'long the flat, up the hill;
I pass him—the beggar! he gains on me still.

I can hear from the stand the glad thousands that cheer;
Once over that fence, and the winning-post's near.

"Here they come!" "Here they are!" and away they are gone;
We fly over the fence, past the thick of the throng.

Ply the whip, drive the spur, lean forward, my lad,
With wild staring eye, like a fellow that's mad.
Neck and neck—one stride further, hurrah! it is done:
"He will win," he is winning—"yes! Old Galloper's won."

There is waving of hats, what a roar they give out.
As they rise to a man, with a heart-thrilling shout;
I patted Old Galloper leaping to the ground,
I felt giddy with joy at the echo around.

There is foam on his skin, on my spur there is blood,
But his wind is as sure, and his mettle as good,
And his eye is as bright, and his courage as stout,
As when wing'd at the start by the burst of the shout.

I AND THEE.

As the wild flower to the wild bee,
  As the lark to the sunny cloud.
As the wild bird to the wild sea.
    So am I to thee.
  Be not then so proud,
Though with beauty's majesty
  Thou art rich endowed.

The lark toils up to the sun,
  The stream toils on to the sea,
The rills to the river run
    Resting never a one.
  As I run to thee.
Frown not then nor mock at me,
  As you have begun.

WELLAWAY!

Ah, wellaway!
Slowly through the cold hard clay
Doth the corn-blade make its way,
Groping blindly for the day—
Wellaway!

Slowly, without song or sound,
Through the frozen meadow ground,
Do the flowers creep up to-day—
Wellaway!

Slowly does the spring unfold
All her wealth and joy untold,
Slow to marshal her array—
Wellaway!

Slowly, slowly, one by one,
Do the wild birds greet the sun,
Though it shine so very gay—
Wellaway!

Slowly does the winter pass;
More of rain and cold, alas!
Ere we see the summer ray—
Wellaway!

Long shall blow the winter blast,
Long before its rage hath passed,
Changing to the breeze of May—
Wellaway!

WINTER MOONLIGHT.

SOFTLY falls the silver rain, through the boughs that shade the lane,
On the white pools and the dead leaves that lie matted blackly there;
Deepest night's soft lambent fire burns upon yon stately spire,—
In the distant fallow glitters, like a marsh-light, the ploughshare.

All the sky is clear and blue, keen the fleecy cloudlets through
Shine the stars, that sparkle frosty mid the grey drift rippling white,
Heap'd like mountains vapour hidden, change the white clouds, at God's bidding,
Into countless bands of angels, guarding earth and heaven by night.

The great archangel of the sky seems to guide them
as they fly,
Every white flint on the dark clod glimmers whiter
to the moon;
All the voices of the dead are around us as we
tread,
Voices that are with us ever, night and morning,
late and soon,

Clear the dew-drops crystalline glitter as the moon-
beams shine,
Bright the stubble crisp and frosty glints into the
azure light,
Now the clouded moon is brightening, and the long
drear road is whitening,
Now the wind, in gusty billows, tries to rend the
chains of night.

Silver flaming on the wall, pale-winged, wavering
moonbeams fall,
Like the strange, unearthly shadows of a guardian
angel's face,
Very strange and very holy, striking awe in us and
wholly,
As a benediction coming to the dark and lonely
place.

Then the silver shadows waver, very weird in their
behaviour,
Blue and amber is the sky where their white-
flamed glory falls,
Low-voiced winds are in the boughs, all around the
sleeping house,
Waving up the ancient pictures and the hangings
on the walls.

Heavy branches bent and bowing, now and then a
distant lowing
From the meadow cold and silent, from the pasture
hushed and still;
All the chamber windows barred, and the frosted
casements starred
With the blurrings of death's finger, very palsied,
very chill.

Now the pale dim golden cloud doth the moon a
moment shroud,
Now the sky is white and fleecy, veined with soft
and vapoury blue.
Throbbing holy, deep and tender as the eyes of
maiden slender,
When a youth looks down into them, and sees child-
love peeping through.

While without earth lies so holy, silent, calm—as pale and lowly,
As a virgin abbess kneeling at a lonely midnight shrine,—
All is not asleep within, there are wakers flushed with sin,
Fevered eyes that, in the night lamp, like a jewelled idol's shine.

Now within a thousand houses sin, (and lust her sister,) rouses,
Pallid faces hard and cruel watch sick men who calmly sleep;
Joy lies down worn pale with pleasure, and the miser dreams of treasure,
While Grief sits awake, and listens to her children as they weep.

Spendthrifts, count the throbs of breath, curse the slow, delaying death,
Rub the dusty-hoarded jewels in the long-locked cabinet,
Weigh the massy silver spoons, or play slow but merry tunes
On the gittern, while they finger the rich ruby carcanet.

Yet without is fairy land, blue waves on a silver strand
Break with music that we feel, but we strive in vain to hear;
All the dark shapes on the lawn dance and bend until the dawn,
Like a pale avenging angel, calmly rising, doth appear.

Where the dead and bleached pine on the hill doth ghastly shine,
By the valley and the way-post and the *Dead man's broken cross*,
Soft the snow slopes bare and cold, to the long and barren wold,
Where the boughs, like madmen praying, dark against the white sky toss.

Now the pious child awaking is with holy awe o'ertaken,
As he sees two fiery eye-balls shining on him through the dark;
But he knows from the Evangels, that a pair of blessed angels
Watch our slumbers, as the pilot does the tempest-wildered bark.

Cold the moonlight's silver dew falleth a soft balm to few,
Yet to all men bringeth opiates—deep forgetfulness and rest;
Shed thy blessings on me worn with the fever of self-scorn,
With my aching brain o'erlaboured, and my ever-bruised breast.

See in yonder forest glade, where the boughs a twilight made,
The slant moonbeam gloweth brighter for the darkness it pierced through,
So, dear Jesus, grant my life, though with storm and darkness rife,
May have radiant breaks of dawning and some moonlit moments too.

THE ANGELS IN THE GARRET.

In the garret shone the lustre
Of the daylight red and brazen,
Merry motes like fairies gather
In a multitude amazing:
Slanting sunbeams, angel ladders,
Join the cloud unto the garret;
For no window stops the sunlight,
Even though you shut and bar it;
Golden winged, the holy sunbeams
Hasten to the poet's chamber,
Where the rats the whole night clamber,
Long ere light burns on the pane;
Finding what the lord of it,
With his genius and his wit,
Sought for all the day in vain.

Cruel sunbeams, evil angels,
Flashing light upon his brain;

From his dreams of love and heaven,
Just as the loud bells struck seven,
Blazed your glory on the pane,
Calling him to earth again.
He was walking on a terrace
Rich with orange-trees in flower,
Tall beside him rose a palace,
When he heard the fatal hour.
He was pacing down a forest,
Ringing with the bugle peal;
He was slaying a magician
With a skin of stony steel.
He was traversing a desert,
Barren waste of orange sand;
Or was leaping in a shallop,
Steering by an unseen hand.
He was clouded on the Brocken,
Dancing with blue withered witches;
And but now old Abon Hassan
Left him his unnumbered riches.
Right before him rose Damascus,
Every minaret a star,
Then he rubbed his eyes, and found
He was passing Temple Bar;
He was diving down—a kiss
From a mermaid fair to win:

He stood by the boiling Maelstrom,
Leaping fierce and swift within;
In a crater he was seeking
Molten gold 'mid Hecla's ice;
Then he was a turbaned Persian,
Driving camel-loads of spice.

He was Amadis the Lion,
Breaking lances, splitting shields;
He was waving shattered banners
On victorious battle-fields.
He was one of the three hundred
Dying underneath the rock;
While the Persians still were reeling
With the fury of that shock.
He was driving brazen galleys
O'er the wave of Salamis;
He was bending over maiden
Spell-bound in the "House of Bliss."

He rode with the clans of Timour,
Wrapped in furs and fragrant silk;
He bestrode a sable charger,
Trapped in housings white as milk.
He beheld the Temple burning,
And the red cloud raining fire;

He knelt down and prayed to Titus
For the priest, his aged sire.
He was slinging heads of Pagans
To his bloody saddle-bow;
He was striking at the lilies
On the plain of Cressy now.

From the realms of Charlemagne.
From the tangled vines of Spain,
From the land of Oberon,
In the dreamy days by-gone;
From a crowd of dead men's faces,
In the old-remembered places.
From a softly murmured name,
From a black sky edged with flame;
O'er a damp stone where there grew
Nettles; even weeds were few.
From such bliss, and from such pain.
Came he back to earth again.

From a Sultan's cedar palace,
Where the black mutes bear the chalice,
In their ghastly eyes a hope,
Feet as swift as antelope.
From the chamber of the bell,
Where the sexton loves to dwell;

Where the chancel all below
With sky colours is a-glow.
From the chapel underneath,
Fretted by the salt wind's teeth,
To his home, with throb of pain,
Came the poet back again.

He was couching with the Caffre,
Deep amid the giant reeds,
Watching for the wounded lion
By the red pool where he feeds.
By the blood-drops on the branches
He was following a bear,
Cold above him hung the snow peaks,
Far below the earth spread fair,
From all these, with start of pain,
Came the poet back again.

From the dungeon of the abbey
Rising, lost in the midnight,
Watching from the far-off altar,
Slowly creep a speck of light.
From the stony figure waking
From his long sleep on the tomb.
When the moon was swiftly breaking
From her prison house of gloom,

When the ghostly choir was singing
Dirges to the long since dead,
With a black hood solemn muffled,
Or a white shroud on each head.—
From such scenes of fear and pain
Came the poet back again.

From the sound of smitten steel,
Through a roll of muffled wheel;
From a father's dying curse,
From deep blasphemies, or worse;
From the one word ne'er forgot,
From the echo of the clot,
Falling on the coffin-plate;
From the death sob heard but late—
From such agonies of pain
Came the poet back again.

THE BELFRY TOWER.

THE belfry tower is old and strong—
God knows it hath been builded long—
For some cold hand has carved well,
Just over 'gainst the tenor bell,
And underneath the window grate,
Thirteen hundred forty-eight.

Long dead are those whose cross and sign.
And baptism of splashing wine,
Blessed the old bells, whose silver chime
Has never ceased from that same time.
Still sound they swing the whole of the eight
As in thirteen hundred forty-eight.

Their broad hearts yet remain unbroken,
Firm and sound be this the token:
Hope and joy, and love and death
Are still vibrating in their breath,
Floating from the turret's state
As in thirteen hundred forty-eight.

They have tolled for the parting soul,
Or ere the sexton turned the moul;
Gladly greeted many a bride,
Welcomed children born to pride;
Have been still the voices of mute fate
From thirteen hundred forty-eight.

The monks are dead who blessed the bells,
The proud lord in a small grave dwells;
His child has grown to man and died,
Adulteress became the bride;
Yet still the belfry rears its state
As in thirteen hundred forty-eight.

THE OLD FISHERMAN'S LAMENT.

[I remember once, at a Cornish fishing-town, seeing an old fisherman sitting, on a sunny afternoon in August, upon a broken boat that lay deeply imbedded in the hot, dry, soft, crumbling sand. The old man was almost in his dotage, and was mumbling inarticulate words to himself, as he looked, with a vacant and sorrowful stare, at the advancing waves that ran swiftly up to his feet.]

THE old man listens to the sea;
"Ye waves! ye stole my child from me!"
The hoarse waves splashing ceaselessly,
Roar at his feet, with a restless glee.

"Ye waves! ye stole my child from me!
Many miles hence, on the Northern sea,
By the Silver Pits, where the scud blew free,
By the shoal where the dead men wait for me."

"Ye waves! ye stole my child from me!
Blue was his eye, and his glance was free,
I pray to the holy Trinity,
That I may rest where my son may be.

"The waves bring presents of agatrie,
And lay at my feet; but I and ye
Are foes,—go back, and a lullaby
Sing like a dirge where the dead men be.

"I cannot fish; for I know the sea
Feeds on the drowned, in the shoals that be—
Rushing together the wreck to see,
Like devils, when hell's gates open free.

"Yellow his hair, and he looked at me
When the planks stove in, and I seemed to be
Newly in heaven, and thought to see
The throne, the Lamb, and the Trinity.

"White was his brow, as white to me
As the angel wings that the good men see;
I heard him pray, O mother! for thee,
When the choking waves swept over me."

THE FOUNTAIN SPIRIT.

THE fountain leaped up silver-pillared, melting as
it rose to rain,
Splashing on the marble basin, in a shower of
pearly grain,
Music rising, music falling, ebbing, flowing o'er
again,
Oh! the music ever mounting, of that ever-singing
fountain,
Seemed a merry, mingled measure, joyful, yet still
racked with pain.

Did it call to birds in heaven to come down to it
and drink?
Did it bid the sallow roe-deer from the forest to its
brink?
Had it consciousness, that water? Had it life, and
could it think?
Was it a rising type of hope? If not sorrow, why
then sink?

Sure the music ever mounting, of that ever-singing
fountain,
Was the voice of water syren, who had heart and
brain to think.

Ripple, ripple, shooting skyward, like a silver
arrow, springing
Like a fresh-born water angel, seeking heaven. and
still singing,
Chained to earth, yet leaping skyward in a vain
desire of winging,
Sure the music ever mounting, of that ever-singing
fountain,
Was the voice of new-born angel, all its bounty
round it flinging.

Like a young king, free and lavish of his newly-
welcomed treasure,
Feeding lilies with the manna of its cool and
pearly pleasure,
Flinging right and left its coin, like a spendthrift
sick of leisure.
Sure the music ever mounting, of that ever-singing
fountain,
Was a mine-god's cleaving earth to bear up his
silver treasure.

LA TRICOTEUSE.

THE fourteenth of July had come.
And round the guillotine
The thieves and beggars, rank by rank,
Moved the red flags between.
A crimson heart, upon a pole,—
The long march had begun;
But still the little smiling child
Sat knitting in the sun.

The red caps of those men of France
Shook like a poppy field;
Three women's heads, with gory hair,
The standard bearers wield.
Cursing, with song and battle hymn,
Five butchers dragged a gun;
Yet still the little maid sat there,
A-knitting in the sun.

An axe was painted on the flags,
A broken throne and crown,
A ragged coat, upon a lance,
Hung in foul black shreds down.
"More heads!" the seething rabble cry,
And now the drum's begun;
But still the little fair-haired child
Sat knitting in the sun.

And every time a head rolled off,
They roll like winter seas,
And, with a tossing up of caps,
Shouts shook the Tuileries.
Whizz—went the heavy chopper down,
And then the drums begun;
But still the little smiling child
Sat knitting in the sun.

The Jacobins, ten thousand strong,
And every man a sword;
The red caps, with the tricolors,
Led on the noisy horde.
"The *Sans Culottes* to-day are strong,"
The gossips say, and run;
But still the little maid sits there
A-knitting in the sun.

Then the slow death-cart moved along;
And singing patriot songs,
A pale, doomed poet bowing comes
And cheers the swaying throng.
O when the axe swept shining down
The mad drums all begun,
But smiling still, the little child
Sat knitting in the sun.

"Le marquis'"—linen snowy white,
The powder in his hair,
Waving his scented handkerchief,
Looks down with careless stare.
A whirr, a chop—another head—
Hurrah! the work's begun;
But still the little child sat there
A-knitting in the sun.

A stir, and through the parting crowd,
The people's friends are come;
Marat and Robespierre—"Vivat!
Roll thunder from the drum."
The one a wild beast's hungry eye,
Hair tangled—hark! a gun!—
The other kindly kissed the child
A-knitting in the sun.

"And why not work all night?" the child
Said, to the knitters there.
O how the furies shook their sides,
And tossed their grizzled hair.
Then clapped a *bonnet rouge* on her,
And cried—"'Tis well begun!"
And laughed to see the little child
Knit, smiling, in the sun.

THE MASKED BALL.

(Assassination of King Gustavus of Sweden.)

A WHIRL of masks and dominos,
  Mixed yellow, poppy, blue;
The dance went linked and winding,
  As dances love to do.
In mellow thunder groaned the bass,
  Clear, bird-like, chirped the flute;
And, whispering on the alcove bench,
  The lover pressed his suit.

Flutters of blue and crimson,
  Rustles of ribbon and silk,
The masks as black as midnight's brow,
  The satin white as milk;
Such dark eyes reading others,
  Such blue eyes dim with love,
As round and round the dance moved on,
  And red drums beat above.

THE MASKED BALL.

Such soft cheeks glowing crimson,
Where spring and summer meet;
Such hands as soft to the grateful touch
As the down on the ermine's feet.
The dancers moved as swift and gay
As leaves the west winds drive.
The sound and the buzz of voices
Hummed like a new-formed hive.

A stir and cadence swelling high,
Soft murmurs sinking low.
And next a rush of strong-winged sounds,
That eddy to and fro—
Then from this wild abyss rose up
A song that cleft the air,
As from a rent cloud springs the lark
When winter skies grow fair.

'Tis Christmas, and the palace feast
Has reached the crowning joy;
The Chancellor, his care laid by,
Has grown again a boy.
The King, conspicuous o'er the rest.
Moved in a crimson mask,
Dressed as the prince of evil
Bent on a courtly task.

A swirl of silken trains and scarves,—
  Yes! laughter from the throne—
A speck of fire that lit the place,
  A shot, and then a groan.
A thousand faces turned to stare
  Through fumes that round them cling,
When loud a voice cries—"Bar the doors—
  The pale face shot the King!"

THE WHISPER IN THE MARKET-PLACE.

THE wind brings now and then a gust
  Of harvest mirth into the town,
When sudden clouds of whitening dust
  Come sweeping o'er the stubble brown :
The bees are silent in their hive,
  The swallows sleep within their nest,
Careless of all the winds that strive
  To quench the sun-flame in the west.

The flowers that cluster o'er the thatch
  Are closed, but all the scent of noon
Creeps through the doors when lifted latch
  Gives entrance to the light ; the moon
Spreads silvering o'er the dial's face,
  Where saints guard round the old church porch.
Beside yon gabled market-place,
  The sun has scarcely ceased to scorch.

The farmer counts the golden heaps
  Of his new-gathered summer corn;
His honest heart in gladness leaps
  As he froths up the drinking-horn;
And when the reapers shout together,
  He brims each cup with barley juice,
And, merry as the harvest weather,
  Will suffer none to make excuse.

The hunter, with a well-gloved finger,
  Frets playfully his fluttering hawk;
And far behind the strong hounds linger,
  While at his feet the mastiffs stalk.
"Good e'en" to all the market folk
  Comes gladly from his laughing mouth;
The hooded girls his cheerful joke
  Love, as the spring flowers do the south.

The children at the churchyard gate
  On noisy games are all intent,
Nor raise their eyes, though by, in state,
  A burgher to the council went;
But grief disturbs them now and then,
  When screams the shrill voice of the dame:
They swear if they can once grow men,
  They would not stir though father came.

The smith is toiling in his shed—
Bright shines the flame through rift and chink—
The fire upon the anvil red
Waves up but down again to sink;
And firm, as if for life and death,
That sturdy arm smites hot and fast,
And all the while the bellows' breath
Fans up the roaring stithy blast.

The ceaseless sparkles star the room,
Bright horse-shoes glimmer from the roof,
And, Cyclops-like, through dark and gloom,
Wild heads bend round the charger's hoof.
The smith upon his hammer rests,
And listens to the tailor's news;
Strong-armed, with broad and brawny chest,
His cheeks rich tanned with motley hues.

The tailor leans upon the hatch,
His shuffling slippers on his feet,
His gossip voice by fits you catch
Between the hammer's ceaseless beat;
His threaded needle in his hand,
His scissors peeping from his pouch,
A roll of patterns in his band,
The busy craftsman all avouch.

The miller by his mill-dam stands,
And listens to the burring wheel,
Rubbing with glee his floury hands,
For last night rose the price of meal.
The snowy tide that rushes down
Floods with a silver stream his purse;
He chinks his gold when poor men frown,
And counts it when the townsmen curse.

Two lovers by the distant bridge
Watch the swift stream that wanders under.
Where massy pier and greystone ridge
Cleave the clear-flowing tide asunder;
You hear the mill-throb now and then
In spite of all the buzz within,
The miller shouting to his men,
While the white roof is vibrating.

The landlord stands beneath his sign,
That far above him groans and creaks;
He's counting up the jugs of wine
Drunk for the last half-dozen weeks.
Behind him stands the crafty groom,
Stealing from willing maid a kiss;
Cups rattle in the latticed room—
To landlord's ear the sound is bliss.

The miller on the purple down
  Is listening to the rising wind
Sweep headlong on toward the town;
  He knows enough has stayed behind
To drive the sails and turn the wheel;
  The creaking stone from every plank
Shakes off the white dust of the meal
  Upon the sacks, ranged there in rank.

The fisher by the river-side
  Has watched all day the buoyant float,
Though skies grow flushed with crimson pride,
  His changeless eye no beauties note.
In melancholy, lonesome sport
  Gazes like beauty in a glass;
His glittering spoil but newly caught
  Lies writhing by him on the grass.

Far up the rocky mountain stream
  The hunter watches for the deer;
Through golden boughs the waters gleam,
  The leaf upon the oak is sere;
The foam lies white in rocky nooks
  Beneath the boughs all red and brown,
And through a cleft you see the brooks
  Babble together to the town.

The page from castle parapet
  Looks o'er the orchards in the vale,
Sees in the woods the crimson globe
  Flame bright upon the distant sail.
And far beneath the lichened wall
  The distant river glides away;
The wind that rends the poplars tall
  Stays with the flowers to kiss and play.

The breeze that stirs his bonnet's plume,
  And dallies with the castle flag,
Sheds round the rich man's hall perfume,
  Yet strips the beggar of his rag.
The vane upon the old church tower
  Shines like a star above the trees;
O'er gabled roof the sounding hour
  To weary reapers bringing ease.

The fisher's boat is in the bay,
  And rocking by the weedy shore;
His shouting children leap and play,
  And bid the hush'd waves louder roar.
The gulls scream floating round the crag,
  The breakers whiten all the reef,
The sea-bird, poised upon the jag,
  Fills the grey air with shrieks of grief.

A sudden gloom fills all the town,
The wind comes sighing o'er the moors,
And wandering, moaning up and down,
Shakes with its trembling hand the doors,—
When slowly through the market-place
A stranger rode, but spoke to none;
A broad hat darkened all his face,
He never looked up at the sun.

The dealers stopped to stare and gaze,
The children ceased to talk and play;
On every gossip's face amaze,
In every mother's eye dismay;
The matrons at the open pane
Stayed all at once their spinning-wheels,
The old wife hushed her wise old saying,
The threads ceased running from the reels.

A whisper through the long street ran—
It spread through all the market-place;
The cobbler turned his ready ear
Unto the tailor's earnest face;
Both mouths pursed up, and eyes half closed,
Afraid to let the secret out;
The deaf man stared, half angry, posed,
For none into his ear would shout;

The pilgrim, by the way-side cross,
  Ceased half unsaid his votive prayer;
The knight pulled up his weary horse,
  The ploughman staid his glittering share;
The miller stops the noisy mill,
  The ringers in the belfry rest,
All through the valley to the hill
  Bear down the rain-clouds from the west.

Another year—the tall grass grew,
  And seeded in the open street;
At noon unmelted lay the dew,
  In spite of all the parching heat;
The smith's red fire has long gone out.
  A mournful silence fills the mill,
You cannot hear the reapers shout,
  The very tailor's tongue is still.

THE HORN OF ULPHUS.

[The horn of Ulphus, a Saxon chief, is still preserved in the sacristy of York Minster. It is of immense size, and is probably the tip of an elephant's tusk. It is curiously carved, and has become from age of a rich mellow colour. Ulphus is said to have filled it full of wine when he presented his lands, kneeling at the high altar, and as he rose drained it at a draught to the honour of St. Peter. We have, by a fair poetical license, supposed it to have been used at civic banquets by the monarchs who have at various times visited the northern capital. The Horn, we may add, is undoubtedly of Eastern origin; and, if not brought from Antioch by some Roman pro-consul, may have been part of a crusader's spoil at Acre or Damietta.—York Cathedral is dedicated to St. Peter.]

Bearded kings have drained thee oft,
'Mid the reapers in the croft;
Slaves have frothed thee for the Cæsar,
Watching in the glebe the leaser.

Round the torch-lit raven banner.
Waiting like the Jews for manna,
Sat the Danes, and mixed up
Hubba's blood in Ulpha's cup.

Vowing, by their sable raven,
They would slay the Saxon craven,
And the hare should crouch and breed,
Where the Seven Princes feed.

Next the mailed Norman came,
Fast before him burnt the flame.
Pestilence his herald fleet,
Famine shivering at his feet.

Where his charger's red feet trod,
Barren grew the blighted sod,
All before him sweet and fair,
All behind him scorch and bare.

Brimming full the swart crusader,
Pledged in thee the turbaned trader,
When he sheathed his broken brand,
By Damascus' burning sand.

When the proud Plantagenet
With the Dame of Cyprus met,
He before the Virgin's shrine,
Filled thee full of Gascon wine.

Grimly swore by lady's love,
By her mantle, brooch, and glove,
For her sake he'd snap a lance
In the very heart of France.

Scarce a year had passed away,
John came scowling from the fray,
Prodigals and jesters all,
Held at York their festival.

Portly abbot all askance,
Trembled at his wily glance,
When he saw the altar plate
Glitter through the cloister grate.

Wounded Stephen sorely spent
With the jostling tournament,
Swearing 'twas a kingly cup,
Bade his jester take a sup.

Edward, travel-worn and hot,
From his foray on the Scot,
Cried for wine his thirst to stanch,
"Wallace, Wallace! *ma revanche.*"

Faint and pale the wounded king *
Dipped thee in St. Peter's spring,
As through aisle and chapel dim,
Came the pealing battle hymn.

* The King of Scotland taken prisoner by Queen Philippa.

Henry, fresh from Agincourt,
Held thee up aloft in sport,
Bade an archer at a gulp,
Drain thee without aid or help.

She of Anjou, full of scorn,
Raised unto her lips this horn,
As she leapt upon her barb,
All a man but for the garb.

Sleepless Richard called for thee,
Cursing the sweet Litany,
As it rose like a perfume,
From St. Peter's holy tomb.

Henry swore to courtier pliant,
Thou wert goblet for a giant;
Poured the last drop on the stones,
Vowing by A'Becket's bones,

Not a lord in all his train,
Such a cup as that could drain;
Then he shouted for the chalice,
From the shrine of good St. Alice.

Rowley and his clustering fair,
Perfumes tossing from their hair,
Laughed as with a pouting lip;
Every beauty took a sip.

THE DEIL AMANG THE LESLIES.

[I have read somewhere an old Scotch tradition of a young Highland Romeo, who came in disguise to a banquet given by the chieftain of a hostile house, with the intention of carrying off, like a second Lochinvar, the lady of his love, the daughter of his father's enemy, He was discovered by his mask falling off as he led up the first dance, but instantly drawing his dagger and, continuing the measure, he passed up the ranks of the bystanders, stabbing them right and left, and eventually making his escape unscathed from the terror-stricken serving-men. I have ventured to heighten the story, and to complete the abduction. I believe there is a piper's tune still existing, called, "*The devil among the Leslies*," which commemorates this dance of death. I have laid the scene, as to manners and dress, about the reign of James VI. The reader must imagine the young 'brave' now grown old, relating the daring adventure of his youth to a friend. I thought the personal relation would give the poem a more lively and dramatic air.]

How this dagger blade is rusted,
Never bright since when I thrust it

Right up to the dudgeon hilt
(See such scenes thou never wilt),
Long ago in banquet hall,
When I gaily led the *Brawl*,*
Into one the Leslie trusted!

As I smiling led the Brawl,
Stout I then was, gay and tall;
There were fiddlers, there were harpers,
There were drinkers, there were sharpers,
There were dicers, all intent
On the way the black spots went,
Little thinking how within
They were spotted thick with sin;
And behind them sneered the carpers.

I, black-mask'd, and rich bedight,
Opened the gay ball that night,
Danced the *Pavin's* solemn measure,
With the sweet one, my heart's treasure,
'Till the music 'gan to vary,
Then we tripped in a *Canary*,
And I pressed her hand so white.

* A favourite dance of the Elizabethan age; as were also the *Canary* and the *Pavin*; the one slow and stately, the other quick and lively.

As the Laird of Inverary
Followed up the swift *Canary*,
Whispered I, but soft and low,
"I am one that ye should know."
As I led her to her seat,
Fell my mask off at her feet.
How he stared, young Inverary!

I, disdaining to retreat,
Hurled at him a gilded seat,
Then drew sword, and placed my back
'Gainst the wall, as frowning black,
Flocked around me the retainers.
Fools! by death they'd be no gainers.
Then swooned at my side my sweet.

This did many faces sadden,
I, forsooth, it seemed to madden,
Fast as murmurs spread around,
I leapt onward with a bound,
Clove a gallant to the middle,
Ere they could read right the riddle—
Sight of blood my eyes did gladden.

Ere they could read right the riddle,
Ere the fiddler hushed his fiddle,

In their chieftain's plaided breast
This good knife of mine did rest.
Broadsword bare, and Highland dirk,
On that night did bloody work,—
Helped them to unfold the riddle.

How the fiddlers, and the harpers,
All the jesters, and the carpers,
Crowded round to see the blow
That should slay the daring foe;
How the singers, pale with fright,
Dropped their wine-cups on that night,
And their cards—flung down the sharpers.

In my plaid I caught their blades,
Flaring torches flung red shades,
Jewels on each brawny chest
Splintered east and splintered west,
And the guests fled all away
When they saw the growing fray,
Little 'customed to such raids.

Half the women fled away,
Like the new-fledged doves in May;
How their silken dresses fluttered,
How the greybeards frowned and muttered,

Every varlet seized his pike.
But I slew ere they could strike,
For they loved not that grim play.

Roaring huntsman urged fierce tyke
To leap on me; shaft of pike
Pinned him howling to the floor.
Then arose a wild uproar,
And I hewed a bloody path,
Through wild wardens, black with wrath.
As they shouted, "Bar the door."

Felling swift the bungling boor,
As he strove to bar the door.
Leapt I as a wounded stag
Does from thicket on to crag;
Bleeding, fainting, but at bay,
So turned I on their array,
As a lion on the Moor.

Then sore wearied with the fray,
Scowling at the knaves' array,
I put bugle-horn to mouth;
Quick from east, and north, and south,
Poured my clansmen, *slogan* shouting,
And began, swords drawn, their flouting,
As they cleared for me a way.

O to see the flight and routing,
At the terror of that shouting,
Target cloven, bullets singing,
Steel blade on steel skull-cap ringing,
Axes splintering, oak-plank crashing,
Red rain on the portal splashing,
Howling, yelling, screaming, flouting.

I fought on into the hall,
Where so late I led the Brawl,
And I bore the maiden trembling,
Eyes bent down, in sweet dissembling.
How her little heart was beating,
As I clasped her round—the sweeting,
And far distant from the fray,
Kissed each tear of pearl away.
Kissed her brow, and mouth, and all.

THE OLD GRENADIER'S STORY.

(Told on a bench outside the Invalides.)

'Twas the day beside the Pyramids,
It seems but an hour ago,
That Kleber's Foot stood firm in squares,
Returning blow for blow.
The Mamelukes were tossing
Their standards to the sky,
When I heard a child's voice say, "My men.
Teach me the way to die!"

'Twas a little drummer, with his side
Torn terribly with shot;
But still he feebly beat his drum,
As though the wound were not.
And when the Mameluke's wild horse
Burst with a scream and cry,
He said, "O men of the Forty-third,
Teach me the way to die!

"My mother has got other sons,
With stouter hearts than mine,
But none more ready blood for France
To pour out free as wine.
Yet still life's sweet," the brave lad moaned,
"Fair are this earth and sky;
Then, comrades of the Forty-third,
Teach me the way to die!"

I saw Salenche, of the granite heart,
Wiping his burning eyes—
It was by far more pitiful
Than mere loud sobs and cries.
One bit his cartridge till his lip
Grew black as winter sky,
But still the boy moaned, "Forty-third,
Teach me the way to die!"

O never saw I sight like that,
The sergeant flung down flag,
Even the fifer bound his brow
With a wet and bloody rag,
Then looked at locks and fixed their steel,
But never made reply,
Until he sobbed out once again,
"*Teach me the way to die!*"

Then, with a shout that flew to God,
  They strode into the fray;
I saw their red plumes join and wave,
  But slowly melt away.
The last who went—a wounded man—
  Bade the poor boy good-bye,
And said, "We men of the Forty-third
  Teach you the way to die!"

I never saw so sad a look
  As the poor youngster cast,
When the hot smoke of cannon
  In cloud and whirlwind pass'd.
Earth shook, and Heaven answered:
  I watched his eagle eye,
As he faintly moaned, "The Forty-third
  Teach me the way to die!"

Then, with a musket for a crutch,
  He limped unto the fight;
I, with a bullet in my hip,
  Had neither strength nor might.
But, proudly beating on his drum,
  A fever in his eye,
I heard him moan "The Forty-third
  Taught me the way to die!"

They found him on the morrow,
  Stretched on a heap of dead;
His hand was in the grenadier's
  Who at his bidding bled.
They hung a medal round his neck,
  And closed his dauntless eye;
On the stone they cut, "The Forty-third
  Taught him the way to die!"

'Tis forty years from then till now—
  The grave gapes at my feet—
Yet when I think of such a boy
  I feel my old heart beat.
And from my sleep I sometimes wake,
  Hearing a feeble cry,
And a voice that says, "Now, Forty-third,
  Teach me the way to die!"

THE CATHEDRAL BUILDER.

Now is my building founded,
Complete to the crowning stone,
That sharp, keen top of the lance-like spire.
That rises tapering like a fire,
Where the noisy daw in his turn may build.
And call his nest his own.

For scarce the loudest note of the choir
Will reach that blue serene;
Yet his home will shake at the roar of the bell.
The soaring chants between;
O there he'll chatter, and feed, and sit,
Not caring for abbot or queen.

I've dug the crypt for darkness;
The aisle the red lights pave,
Without is the twilight cloister,
Here the sun-flooded nave,
And within is the choir for prayer and praise,
With its chapel for my grave.

They tell me I've jostled Christ aside
With *my* image and *my* tomb;
But may the angels blot my name
At the dreadful day of doom,
If I wished for praise—I love not praise
From king, or priest, or groom.

Yet 'tis a stately building,
And like a crystal wall
Rises the great west window—
A missal leaf that's all—
So says my sneering rival,
Who twits me from Saint Paul.

Last night I saw the angels,
Just like a flock of doves,
Come down to bless the building,
For God such temples loves—
A richer pile than Solomon's
Is this where dwell the doves.

I've cut no boastful legend—
The nun's walk underneath—
No shields to blaze with quenchless fire
In windows. Why then, s'death—
Why should they grudge me grave room,
The altar-floor beneath.

Have I not saints by dozens
  Around the chapter room—
The twelve, the four, the martyrs,
  And all to guard my tomb?—
With lines of singing angels
  To rise through light and gloom?

Who says this pile of marble
  Is vanity throughout?
Do not the crowned confessors
  Guard all the porch about?
Then, as the viper lives to sting,
  Let these, my mockers flout.

Yes, it is hard for thirty years
  To hew and chip the stone—
To fix the rainbow in the glass—
  To build the saints a throne;
And then for sneering monks to grudge
  A grave within one's own.

It is a costly work of mine,
  This prison-house of song,
With underneath the sainted dead,
  Above, the angel throng,
And everywhere the shechinah
  Of incense all day long.

Vibrate with music night and day,
Ye organ-pipes of gold;
Let the tall roof shake with the psalms
And voices manifold,
When the deep thunder of the bass
Shall echo strong and bold!

Then let the mass sound long and loud—
The psalm go echoing up—
Theirs be the liquor and the wine,
Be mine the graven cup—
Now I have thought the matter out
I can contented sup.

HARVEST RHYMES.

When the red, ripe wheat is flowing, billow-blowing
like a sea,
When the reapers call each other, early mornings
on the lea;
When the poppies burn in scorn of the pale light
of the dawn,
And the corn-flower tells its sorrow to its love, the
kingly bee.

Now through soft mists cloudy purple rise the fir-
trees one by one,
Now the broad disks of the wheat-fields blaze like
gold shields in the sun;
The cattle low, the breezes blow, and the sickles
glitter keen,
Ruddy faces moving eager, glistening steel by
flashes seen.

This fair earth is slowly fashioned from dead lilies, so they say,
Withered roses, honied pleasures, all a-bloom but yesterday;
So life's fashioned—rendered fertile by its long corrupted joy,
Watered by the tears of childhood and the weeping of the boy.

Heaven's hermit, high and lonely, soaring as none other can—
Praising with a simple music raining on the husbandman;
Over plough, and corn, and reaper, golden stubble, fallow grey,
Springs the lark, and craves a blessing on the coming harvest day.

Poet of the upper air, never knowing human care,
Happy as a new-crowned angel in thy sanctity of song,
Glad in summer and in autumn, in the frost and in the sun,—
What a lesson for the worldling, fainting ere he's well begun.

THE SMITH'S CHORUS.

GIVE us a hand, my mate,
Are we not fellows?
Have we not twenty years
Toiled at these bellows?
Have we not, hand and hand,
Smitten together;
Now with a thunder stroke,
Now with a feather?

Seen the sparks, streaming up,
Iron turn vapour—
Laughed as the bar of steel
Dripped like a taper;
Moulded the leadlike clay,
Plying the bellows,
Then, Roger, take my hand,
Are we not fellows?

THE TWO MUSICIANS AFTER THE OPERA.

WELL, Panormo, *caro mio*, now we're snug and warm at home,
And so still the sable city crowned by the majestic dome,
Let us sit, and in the embers shape our old dear street at Rome.

That *allegro*—how it chafed one!—was not taken quick enough;
Herr Conductor, though so nimble, isn't of the sterling stuff;
And that basso, though I say it, is, per Bacco, rather gruff.

Still, my eyes ache with the glitter of those thousand streets of lamps;
Through my limbs creeps all the chillness of this London's fogs and damps;
Only hear below our window that dull policeman's measured tramps!

In the distance, low and muffled, like a glutted wild beast's roar,
Comes the murmur of this London, like the surge on Lidos' shore:
How unlike the Roman midnights, Giacomo, in days of yore!

Sometimes, when the curtain's lifting, I forget my violin,
Almost hoping that the Duomo and the glories hid within
Will rise to me—then I stare at gas, at people, shut my eyes, and so begin.

And, Panormo, *caro mio*, but for power of looking back,
Shouldn't you and I, *amigo*, pine away, amid these black
Seas of mud and skies of vapour—not like Alban air, good lack!

Tides of faces, stone and iron, driving on unto the 'change;
How that scherzo through my fancy will persist to flit and range!
Hand my violin, Panormo, this staccato's new and strange.

O this London! dear *amigo*, think of Roma and its hills,
Pillar, statue, palace, gardens, all the marble fountain rills.
How that young soprano's roulade through my old brain shakes and trills!

See St. Peter's world of columns, altars, shrines, and miles of roof;
Dome, a universe of colour: never shall the Austrians' hoof
Blood-print Roma—no, Panormo, even though kings keep aloof.

Good night, *caro mio*, you have half a mile to walk.
I must sit up till the dawning, at this piece of Clapperchalk;
All the long laid ghosts of childhood will around my candle stalk.

I shall dream of stately Corso, where the blood-red
coaches roll,—
Of the dim and painted chapels, where they pray
for dead men's soul;
Then wake up at roar of London, and the cabs
that grind and roll.

One more glass, *amigo mio;* break your pipe
before you go.
Life is brittle—who can tell us when the black
hand strikes the blow?
That?—O that is laudanum mixture; I've been
rather weak and low.

HOGARTH'S NOTES ON HIS THUMB-NAIL.

(After a morning's walk)

My notes—those white lips faintly pressed
Close to a dusty window pane,
The red eyes staring through the rain.

The sudden glare of tavern cheat,
When the fool's eyes were turned away—
Just lightning in a summer's day.

The spendthrift staring through the blind
At a tall glass of curdling wine;
Soon will the father froth and pine.

The puzzled, anxious, wondering gaze
Of wife, on husband's fist intent,
Thinking it but a jest he meant.

The viper eyes, so red and pinched,
Of the dwarf that tried to stab the man
In the bar of the "Goose and Frying-pan."

The surgeon's look who raised the cloth
From dead man's face, so hard and cold;
His scowl when he replaced the fold.

OCTOBER DUSK.

O THE saffrons and the purples of the wild October eves,
When the gold of autumn withers, and the wind plucks off the leaves.

When the grey drifts slowly deepen, losing all their inward light,
When the dark night, dull and leaden, presses on the dimming sight.

Cold the last night's rain is lying in the furrows bright and still,
Glistening in between the ridges, that the dead leaves choke and fill.

Ghastly glimmers, of weird whiteness, streak between the ashen grey,
Clefts of crimson, pale green lustres, bar the shroud of dying day,

Like the rags of purple splendour, dropping from a
mummy king—
Now the night wind, rising slowly, moans, blasphe-
ming God and spring.

Stifling darkness, black and solid, gathers round
the dim, white road,
Damp oppression, as of evil, crushing man beneath
the load.

Still from dead leaves in the silence now and then
a twitter's borne,
As of lone bird chilled, yet dreaming of the April
and the dawn.

THE RIDE TO THE SHRINE.

First the herald's gilded show;
How the lusty trumpets blow!
Then the merchants, rank and file,
Next the nuns that pray and smile;
Then the strong knights in their mail,
Banner blowing like a sail,
Gilded housings shining out
Through the dust that wraps the rout;
So our band of pilgrims went
To A'Becket's shrine in Kent.

Shields that with their burn and blaze
All the peasants' eyes amaze;
Starred and tongued with herald gold,
Blood-red crosses manifold,
Bars of azure, spots of sable,
Scutcheons gay with scroll and label,
Silver tears on purple field,
Crimson lattice, azure shield,

Bezants, each one like a sun,
From the Moslem Sultans won;
So our band of sinners went
To the holy shrine in Kent.

Rare devices, strange and quaint,
As the king-at-arms can paint;
Broken daggers, dripping gore,
Eagles chained that cannot soar;
Bleeding hart and wyvern's wing;
Viper with his poison sting;
Griffin with the golden scale,
Dragon with the emerald mail;
Tiger-cat with gory tongue,
Bear that to the pine tree clung:
So in stately guise we went
Flaunting to that shrine in Kent.

Legends, too, so full of pride,
Blazoned letters, bright and wide;
On one pennon, blowing free,
"Strike" 's the only word I see;
"Try me," in defiance writ—
There was lion's wrath in it;
"I may break, but never bend."
On a flag from end to end.

"God alone," another bore
On the tabard that he wore.
So in knightly garb we went,
Tramping to the shrine in Kent.

Then the abbot with his ring,
And the white-clad boys that sing;
Monks in grey, and friars in black,
Shouting chorus at his back.
Then the crosier, gold and stately,
Born aloft and held sedately;
Fuming incense, tossed and flung,
From the silver censers swung.
Mitres shining with the gem,
Marked the bishops each of them,
As the band of sinners went
Ambling to the shrine in Kent.

Blubber lip and leering eye,
Downcast face that blushes dye;
Lolling tongue, and brutal jaw,
Wrinkled foreheads full of law.
Sallow visage, envy wrung,
Where the sweat-drops clammy hung;
Hypocrite! among the rest,
Fat hands clasped upon his breast.

Then the coward's writhing face,
Looking round as from a chase,
Next him, with a sullen mouth,
Burning eyes, all red with wrath,
Came a murderer fresh from guilt,
With his red hand on his hilt:
So the sinners mocking went
To Saint Thomas' shrine in Kent.

Lust was there with full-ringed eye,
With his ready start and sigh;
Avarice thinking of the bond,
Never of the man it wronged;
Gluttony, with peeping eyes
Never lifted to the skies;
Anger, hot and vexed of face,
Pulling at his doublet lace;
Stealthy slander eager eyed,
Pressing to his patron's side;
There were lovers joining lips,
Caring not, though sun eclipse:
So the motley sinners went
Praying to the shrine in Kent.

Anger's stern and stony stare,
Shooting lip, and scornful glare;

Vanity's light, fickle gaze;
Wonder gaping with amaze;
Pride that's trying to look meek,
Treble chin and double cheek,
Mouth with black teeth all awry,
Waxen skin and blood-shot eye.
Bright eyes all athirst for sin,
Rose-leaf velvet soft the skin,
Hands would turn a lily grey,
Were a lily in the way:
So the ladies smiling went
To A'Becket's shrine in Kent.

Some were singing David's psalms,
Others holding hats for alms;
Some, with broken sobs and faint,
Praying to a road-side saint;
Others doling out a creed,
(Every line they touch a bead);
Friar, with rope about his waist,
By the horsemen sturdy paced;
While the abbot, silken clad,
Ambled on his glossy pad,
Playing with his gilded rein,
With his jewels and his chain:
So the mocking sinners went
To the holiest shrine in Kent.

THE SHADOW HUNT.

Brighter, lighter, ever whiter, bloomed the moonshine on the road,
Fresh and blue the welkin grew, and on we beggars strode,
As fast and free the wind with glee seemed pushing at our load.

Over meadow moved our shadow—two long shadows, black and tall,
Flat and hollow, still they follow like two spirits at our call,
Fast o'er the path as if in wrath, long and boding on the wall.

"Death and time" we sang in rhyme, "wait upon us at our beck;
We've no castle, serf, or vassal, we both land and money lack,
Yet no varlet, clad in scarlet, could more serf-like join our track."

"Hush!" said Davus; "Jesu save us—look
behind, and cross your breast;"
Then half trembling, but dissembling, laughing
turned, I looking west,
Saw three shadows o'er the meadows move slow
through the trees at rest.

"One for me, and one for thee, but this third one
comes from Hades,"
Said my fellow, turning yellow, "Tell me, brother,
whence this shade is;"
Then he laughs, and both our staffs seizes,
screaming, "Virgin aid us."

A tree beneath, with clenchen teeth, fell my friend
as in a swoon,
Then I, dragging, cursed his lagging, turned his
white face to the moon,
But he cried, and shrieked, and died, just as night
was at its noon.

A grave I dug, and warm and snug left him under
the oak tree,
Alone and sad, but double clad, singing through
the litany;
On I hurry o'er me scurry white clouds with a
windy glee.

Heart not sinking, little thinking, suddenly I turned to look;
On the meadows moved three shadows, then my cloak I rent and shook,
Praying, groaning, ruin owning, swift I leaped across a brook.

"Death and hell," I cried, "are fell; my sin casts its shadow, too;
Saint and devil, good or evil, why a beggar thus pursue?"
Still they follow over hollow, loud the night wind shrieking blew.

As I swoon, the dull, red moon sinks down headlong in a cloud;
I sobbed and groaned, and wept and moaned, in dream I screamed aloud,
But I woke, blue day had broke, and from off me dropped the shroud.

A mile and more the skylarks soar, and the corn rolled like a sea;
Through the dawning of that morning, I could hear, through hedge and tree,
O'er the tillage, from a village, voices chanting litany.

GONE!

Some day, a friend shall, whispering low,
Ask for me at the muffled door,
Hushing the humming of a song,
As one shall answer, "He is gone."

Then duns shall creep on stealthy foot,
Peering about the half-shut gate;
And when they push in rough and strong,
Then one shall answer, "He is gone."

Yes, kinsmen from a distance come
Hearty and eager to the door,
Shall, after waiting cold and long,
Hear the hushed answer, "He is gone."

THE DEAD KING'S TOILETTE.

(Edward VI.)

Two crones, their lean hands shaking,
  Stood by a plume-decked bed,
Gazing without a tear or sob,
  On the sheet that covered the dead.
"A pleasant corpse," the eldest croaked,
  "As ever died in spring;
Yea, by the mass! what a jest to think
  That this poor boy was a king!"

The bed was hung with cloth of gold,
  Worked over with stars and crowns;
Yet still the crones sat there and talked,
  Not heeding royal frowns.
"A pleasant corpse," still one would cry,
  "As ever died in spring.
Oh! by the mass! what a jest to think
  That this poor soul was a king!"

Oh! what an eager, curious art,
The crones by turns displayed!
Working the linen in pleats and frills,
And the flannel in fold and braid.
"A pleasant corpse," still one would screech,
"As ever died in spring.
Now, by the mass! what a jest to think
That this poor soul was a king!"

THE CITY OF THE CLOUDS.

I SPENT a summer afternoon.
In the city of the clouds:
I had laid dead hopes away,
Quiet and silent in their shrouds:
When I heard the harpers play,
In the city of the clouds.

Golden skies of endless June
Roofed the city of the clouds;
Underneath the banquet hall,
Lay my dead hopes in their shrouds,
Silent and forgot by all,
In the city of the clouds.

How they pressed me by the hand,
In the city of the clouds;
How they kissed my lip and brow,
As those used who sleep in shrouds,
How they pledged me with a vow,
In this city of the clouds.

Suddenly the air grew black,
Round the city of the clouds.
As I looked each guest grew pale
As the dead who lay in shrouds.
Lightning-pierced, it fell to mist,
All my city of the clouds.

THE MAD PILGRIM'S DREAM.

UNDER a palm in Galilee,
Hearing the whispers of the sea,
A vision showed itself to me.

* * * *

They bring me to a sultan's tent,
My shaven head is bowed and bent,
My golden robe is torn and rent.

I toss the desert sands about,
The silken eunuchs scream and shout,
I kneel and let them mock and flout.

I curse them and their prophet too,
And then the mad sultan dagger drew,
And on me like a panther flew.

I rub my ring—I am alone;
Over my head the vulture's flown,
That bore me from the tyrant's throne.

The Nile flows softly by my side.
The palm trees whisper—then I cried,
"O Lord, methinks I'd better died!"

Against the rosy evening sky,
The doves bound all to Cairo fly;
"O had I wings like them!" I cry.

I down the yellow river float,
In Egypt's mummy coffin boat;
Of what grave-plunder should I note?

I dig beneath the tamarisk,
Under the shattered obelisk,
Graven with planet and with disk.

I found the buried Pharoah's robe,
His serpent crown and golden globe.
I threw away my ragged tobe.

I leapt into the coffin craft,
Tears from the funeral urn I quaffed,
I wept, and then I rose and laughed.

I passed an iceberg all a-shine,
With flashing purple lights of wine,
With diamond lustre hyaline.

I floated to a sandy beach,
A dead man hailed me—but his speech
Was low, his hand I could not reach.

The winged Tartar horsemen came,
And bore me in a gust of flame
Through burning cities, till so tame

My wild horse grew, it licked my hand,
And watched me on the desert sand;—
I struck the gates of Samarcand.

I saw black tents spread everywhere,
Neighings that shook the icy air,
The green corn rising thick and fair.

Bright in the distance China lay,
Pagoda's tinkling bells I may
Scarce hear—I see the wall's array.

The silk-robed men with peacock plumes,
Fair, golden coats—and now there looms
A city grand with marble tombs.

Great domes, and minarets, and towers;
'Tis Delhi!—priests proclaim the hours,
And call to prayers; but we are Giaours.

Our horse-tail standards swept along,
With cymbal and barbaric song,
I was the leader of the throng.

The elephants, ten thousand, came
Like moving mountains, eyes of flame,
And all—this Bajazet to tame.

They shout, and call me Tamerlane,
I ride o'er smoking Samarcane,
And brain the idol of the fane.

I burst the bubble god, and out
Leap countless bezants round about;
The bowing millions cry and shout.

Now Moussul and the East is mine,
From where great Baldac's turrets shine,
To Yang-fu, and the proud Nan-ghine.

I mount the Caliph's seat, and tread
The conqueror's vintage gory red;
The kings pray to me for their bread.

They bring me spices, gold, and gems,
I bruise the Syrian diadems,
My Tartar horse the world o'erwhelms.

From Cush to snowiest Himaleh,
To Ceylon and its bluest bay,
Red idols strewed my chariot way.

My crimson banners dim the sun,
The stars, my heralds, chase and run,
Hailing me lord, the sovereign one.

They bring me spice and ivory,
With falcons, stately, from the sea,
And frankincense from far Nanjee.

I fell asleep within my tent,
As on to conquer Balkh I went ;
I woke, and all my pride was rent.

My horse lay smitten by the wind,
Before, beside me, and behind,
No living creature could I find.

One camel only calmly fed,
I leaped upon him, and his head
Turned round to see the heaps of dead.

Three days and nights I wandered on ;
Like fire above me burnt the sun,
My bag of rice was long since gone.

The parrots screamed, and like a flame,
Flamingoes through the silence came ;—
Another land, and yet the same.

The peasant sows his melon seed,
The goats beside him crop and feed,
I heard the child the Koran read.

Then desert strewn with pilgrim's bones,
Rich perfumes, and the Indian stones,
Lost treasures from the distant zones.

I trod the gems to dust, my blood
Was fevered : "Take this gold for food,"
I cried, and gnawed the cedar wood.

Rich-fruited dates their branches fling,
The guardians of the desert spring,
Where camel-drivers pipe and sing.

I sat down to the meal—ah! then,
A fire-wind struck the beasts and men,
And drove me to a rocky den.

Where I lay faint, and saw the asp
Swell in the hot sand, that my grasp
Caught from the earth with anguished clasp.

* * * *

I woke, and heard a voice as sweet
As angel's cry—"Now on your feet,
'Tis sunset, Hassan—rise and eat."

THE BABY KING.

Not ten years old, and yet a king,
Throned high upon a velvet chair,
Beneath the gilded cloth of state,
He waves his sceptre with an air;

Welcomes the early with a nod,
Reproves the tardy with a frown;
Then to his lady mother turns,
And counts the pearls upon her gown.

The chancellor, with ponderous brow,
Talks to him of his common weal;
He pulls him by his jewelled chain,
And, laughing, hides the heavy seal.

The chamberlain, a stately lord,
Kneels down to yield his golden key;
The monarch all the while intent,
With the cat's cradle on his knee.

The privy council's grey beards meet,
The wooden noddles bend together;
The king is hearing the debate,
And playing with a peacock's feather.

WHAT I SAW THROUGH A TUDOR WINDOW.

THERE were motley jesters sprawling on the floor,
There were ribboned pages playing round the door,
There were gallants tickling maidens with the rushes,
And criticizing all their various depth of blushes.

There were yeomen looking at the bloodhounds' teeth,
Sly varlets lifting tapestry to spy beneath,
Falconers with ruffling haggards rising from the fist,
Out of painted casements where the rose the lattice kissed.

There were stewards bragging of their length of sword,
Servants whispering slander of their lord,
Ushers strutting stately with their white-peeled rods,
Mastiffs scratching, restless as the planks were clods.

THE LECTURE-THEATRE AT PADUA.

(Paracelsus.)

Don't tell me, Rupert and Fritz, 'tis the wisest man of the age—
Wiser than Geber, or Lully, or Rhazes, many a stage;
He's all the learning of Scotus, his wit would baffle a Jew,
And with a keen-bladed syllogism he'll run a sly doctor through.

Look at his pile of brain, and the keen eye under the hair
Of the tangled heap of eyebrow, when those smug doctors stare;
What a mouth, all clamped and barred, to shut in a secret truth!
And then when he laughs, what a glare through his beard of his broad, white tooth!

How he smites the desk with his hand, and look at
his long gilt sword;
In the pommel he keeps a devil, bound to the will
of its lord:
Sometimes he screws off the top, and it's out in the
shape of a fly;
But back when he reads his speech, or he beckons
it home with his eye.

I've seen him track a nerve from the foot right up
to the brain,
Seeking the cause of life, and the throne where
the soul may reign;
As one in a workshop gropes, when the lights
are all put out,
And the master is gone, pulling the ropes and
the wheels about.

Lifting the flaccid hand of the cold, white marble
limb,
As if the secrets of God were none of them hid
from him—
As if he made better than that, aye, any day in the
week;—
He smites us down with a frown, if any one dare
to speak.

Yet Moser, Tuesday last, would take up his surgeon's knife,
And try the edge with his thumb. O Lord! what squabble and strife
To see the professor's wrath!—such jostling and crowding of heads!
Such squeezing, and taking of notes all round the hospital beds!

Wonderful man the professor, Erasmus is not his fellow;
He'd beat all the doctors on earth, drubbing them black and yellow:
And they hate him, mock his art, would poison him if they could—
He scarce dare walk at night, to gather herbs in the wood.

HOW THE COLONEL TOOK IT!

(In Square.—*An Affair in the Peninsula.*)

We were standing foot to foot, and giving shoot for shoot,
Hot and strong went our volleys at the blue;
We knelt, but not for grace, and the fuse lit up the face
Of the gunner, as the round shot by us flew.
O the bugle it blew loud, the shot drove in a cloud,
And the bayonets of the boys were at play;
The old colonel, puffing fust, was almost like to bust,
With shouting, "*Faugh a ballagh*, clear a way!"

Bedad! our steels were thick, and it made us mad, not sick,
To see the brave boys melting like the dew;
But the colours overhead, with a whirling gust of red,
Like a thunder cloud, above us fought and blew.

The colonel, he was blown, yet he struck up
Garry Ow'n;
"I know who'll be tired first of this play;"
And every now and then, like a dragon from
his den,
He outs with—"*Faugh a ballagh*, clear the
way!"

My right hand man went down with a cut upon
his crown,
Och! his bloody teeth were clenched with the
pain;
And, bursting with a shout, all the Frenchmen
rode about,
Slashing just like reapers at the grain.
"Let them pound, an hour or more they must
wait outside the door!"
Cried the colonel, hot and savage with the play;
He shook the colour-staff with a shout and with a
laugh,
Roaring out—"*Faugh a ballagh*, clear the way!"

With a hiss, and with a rush, and a will to pelt
and crush,
Drove the bloody, tearing grape through our
rank;

On leg, and arm, and brain, fell that sharp and bitter rain,
Yet we never winked a ha'porth, or yet shrank.
The drummers, all a heat, gave an angry, fretful beat,
As the wind blew the cannon smoke away;
"Och! the colonel, boys, is hit, yet beside the flag he'll sit,
Crying out, "*Faugh a ballagh*, clear the way!"

Then we couldn't stand it longer, and our hot rage grew the stronger,
As we spread in a moment into line;
O colonel, true to you, on the cavalry we flew,
All our bayonets down together—it was fine.
We broke them like a net—la! our steel they never met,
And we drove them all in heaps on that day;
O the colonel fairly screeched to see Ney over-reached,
And thundered, "*Faugh a ballagh*, clear the way!"

When the boys came back to rank, we found him on a bank,
Rather pale, with a cloth about his head;

He'd a bottle by his side, and full of honest pride,
I saw his cheek burn sudden with the red;
Then he grew so wan and weak, he couldn't hardly speak,
But I listened as the waggon drove away,
And may I die alone, if the boy we call our own
Didn't whisper, "*Faugh a ballagh.* clear the way!"

THREE YEARS.

A LORDLY castle on a moor,
Its hundred windows, row by row,
With blood-red sunset all of a glow;
(No king a statelier house could show,)
With its fifty banners all of a blow.

A hundred turrets spouting fire,
Four black walls, gaping, split and rent;
A crimson cloud that like a tent
Wavers above it. Hark! there went
A shriek as from a martyr sent!

A ruin on a thirsty waste—
A tottering wall, a winding stair;
A parapet that high in air
Hangs, grey, by lightning struck, and bare,
Though still the starling nestles there.

THE CID'S STIRRUP CUP.

"Bring me the great gold flagon,"
Cried the baron from his horse,
"And leap, my page, on my roan of roans,
For the Saracen's out in force,
Fill up the spiced old Cyprus wine,
With the scent that would rouse a corse.

"Here's a cup to the good Saints John and Jude,
And one to my father dead;
Hail brave Saint James, whose steed of white
Hath wings all crimson red,
With the blood that spun from a sultan's wound
The day that Ali bled."

Then he drained the flagon huge and long,
And struck it with his fist;
For they cried, that they saw the crescents shine,
Gold spots against the mist:
Then he threw in the air his laughing child,
And its eyes and forehead kissed.

How grim he shook the moths and dust
From the great flag of Castile,
He laughed at the red spots on the folds,
Then looked at the spurs on his heel;
Loud through the window he cursed the knights,
Lagging at their last meal.

He flung his lance as high as the gate,
It made his roan curvet,
And strike ou drifts of the fire-bright sparks.
In his state war-saddle set,
He clashed his breast with his rough mailed hand,
In his chafe and burning fret.

At last, down the flinty mountain path,
He dashed with a stormy curse;
Singing the song of Charles the Great,
And a hymn mixed verse for verse;
Feather and banner, and housing and robe,
Black as the plumes of a hearse.

NIGHTMARES.

A DUMB man struggling with the dark,
Straining to bawl, or sob, or scream,
The sullen anger of the stream
Choking him slowly hour by hour.

A blind slave in a distant land,
Hearing a voice not heard for years;
Striving to call through stifling tears,
For one to put in his—her hand.

A wretch that, like a mad dog's chased
With swords and torches—how he shrieks,
Finding the friendly door he seeks
Bolted and barred, and clamped and braced!

A miner hanging down a cleft,
The fire-damp spreading to his feet;
While round the pit-mouth rebels meet,
Ready to stab him to the heft.

A YEAR AGO; OR, THE DEAD TWELVEMONTH.

WHERE'S the maiden with downcast eyes,
And voice all whispers, murmurs and sighs,
Breath like the flowers, when the west winds blow?
God o' mercy! why, lord, I trow
(Other men have broken a vow),
She's dead and buried a year ago!

Where's the friend, so gentle and calm,
With his soft hand pressing your sturdier arm,
And his ready greeting and clasp, I trow?
God o' mercy! why death, sir, broke
That friend's meek heart with a sudden stroke!
He's dead and buried this year ago!

Then where's the child I saw you kiss,
Your old face flushed with a father's bliss,
As he on your knees leaped to and fro?
O God o' mercy! the turf's still green
Over the youngster's grave, I ween;
He's dead and buried a year ago!

MERCUTIO'S LOVE LINES.

Softest foot upon the rushes—
Softest foot upon the rushes;
Her darling foot will press a rose,
Yet never kill the flower it crushes.

Whiter hand no lover kisses—
Whiter hand no lover kisses;
Soft between her breasts of snow
Nestles love and all his blisses.

Eyes, as dark as violet shadows—
Eyes, as dark as violet shadows;
A smile as sweet, and gay, and soft
As April sunshine on the meadows.

Voice like whispering woods in summer—
Voice like whispering woods in summer;
Soft and low as June winds blow
In the warm midnights of summer.

REGRETS.

One by one—yes! still they say—
So the hours will die away,
So the Aprils yield to May.

Long ago—yes! very long—
Then I cared for mirth and song,
Then I grappled with the throng.

Dead and gone—yes! gone away,
As the rose melts into clay,
When the frost the blossoms slay.

Come and go—ah! so we do,
Passing as the flowers and dew—
Bitter saying, yet too true.

'*Life is short*—and art is long;'
'Tis the burden of the song,
We're repeating all day long.

Time flies—yes! it never sleeps,
Never mourns, and never weeps;
Dumb and calm the tyrant keeps.

Over now—yes! boyhood—youth,
But not my courage, not my sooth—
No, God help me! not my truth.

PLACE POUR LES GRENADIERS!

(A song in the Invalides.)

I've heard the war drum's tumult
'Mid snow, and sea, and sand;
I've tracked the battered eagle
Through hot and frozen land;
And when the fire balls, bursting,
Tore out a bloody way,
I always called with a lusty shout,
"Place pour les grenadiers!"

We trod down Egypt's mamelukes,
And all their silk and gold;
We smote the pride of Prussia
In battles manifold:
And when old surly Blucher
Before our steel gave way,
I called to our men with a lusty shout,
"Place pour les grenadiers."

The white coats at Marengo
Were wasted in our flame ;
Fire flew, and blasted them as we
Wrapped in the hot smoke came.
Now when the pulsing cannon
Proclaims the break of day,
I always shout from my bed in the ward.
"Place pour les grenadiers !"

THE FAMILY CONCERT.

THE blackbird pipes upon the bough
Of the oak tree twisted strong;
The fledglings five in the clay-built nest
Listen unto his song,
And care not though their father be
In time and cadence wrong.

The wind blows half the tune away
(Sing merry, and sing loud);
It pipes a noisier tune the wind,
Lashing the lagging cloud;
But still the birds to their father's song
Are listening glad and proud.

THE END

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